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THE SHORTER TEXT OF LUKE XXII. 15–20

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THE formidable storm of literature concerning the narratives of the Last Supper shows no sign of abating any of its force, and the following reflections are submitted in the none too confident hope that perhaps even at this stage in the discussion the problem can be looked at from an unconventional angle. The Lucan account with its notorious difficulties of text and interpretation, the one being inextricably bound up with the other, has been the Waterloo of many investigators. Both the shorter and the longer texts present the student with their individual mass of problems. Since Hort [1] the arguments against the originality of the longer text have had so wide an influence, especially perhaps on English-speaking writers, that if these thorny questions could be settled by taking a vote, it is possible that even now the shorter text would have it. Unfortunately the weight of argument is rather more evenly divided. Only so can we understand how it is possible for a scholar like Joachim Jeremias entirely to change his mind on the fundamental issue. It may very well be, of course, that the position adopted in the first edition of Die Abendmahlsworte Jesu can still be regarded as unrefuted even by its author. (Who knows if the next edition may not revert to it?) But it cannot be denied that Jeremias' statement of the case in favor of the longer text in the second edition is powerfully argued.[2]

[1] B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, The New Testament in Greek, vol. ii Introduction and Appendix (Cambridge and London, 1882), Notes on Select Readings, pp. 63–64.

[2] J. Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the second edition by A. Ehrhardt (Oxford, 1955), pp. 87–106. Whether one agrees or not with his conclusions, it is clear that he gives the most lucid and fair statement of the facts available. In this paper I only cite evidence of material importance for its purpose.

It is, however, at once a warning and a provocation to observe that another German scholar — of the Roman obedience — Dr. Heinz Schürmann, has conducted concurrently with Jeremias an independent scrutiny of the evidence which has led him also to come down decisively in favor of the authenticity of the longer text as the true Lucan account, but that he does so on grounds which are not only more elaborate than those of Jeremias but are also in a substantial degree incompatible with them.[3] The contrast is so striking as to raise the question whether the arguments of these two rival defenders of the longer text do not cancel one another out.

Some all too familiar facts must first be repeated. The shorter text has four variant forms in the manuscript tradition:

(a) 15–19a, attested in D *a d ff*^{2} *i l.*

(b) 15, 16, 19a, 17, 18, attested in *b e.*

(c) 15, 16, 19a, I Cor. xi. 24b, 17, 18, attested in Syr. Cur.

(d) the reading of Syr. Sin., which is substantially that of Syr. Cur. but has five minor additions. The relation of (c) and (d) may be shown as follows, words occurring only in Syr. Sin. being italicized:

> And he took bread and gave thanks over it and brake and gave to them and said: This is my body that for you *I give*; So be doing for my memory. And *after they supped* he took a cup and gave thanks over it and said: Take this; divine among yourselves. *This is my blood, the new covenant. For* I say to you, that from now I shall not drink of this fruit (*produce of the vine*) until the kingdom of God come.[4]

Whether or not the Old Syriac is dependent on the tradition represented by the Old Latin *b e* is uncertain. But in any event, as T. W. Manson has remarked,[5] both these forms of the text

[3] H. Schürmann, 'Lk. 22, 19b–20 als ursprüngliche Textüberlieferung,' in Biblica xxxii (1951), pp. 364–392, 522–541. This long article is assumed to have securely established the position for his subsequent study of the sources of the Lucan narrative of the Last Supper, of which two parts have hitherto appeared: Der Paschamahlbericht (1953) and Der Einsetzungsbericht (1955), in the series Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen edited by M. Meinertz (Münster, Aschendorff); thereon see C. F. D. Moule in J. T. S. new series, V (1954), pp. 88–89, and VII (1956), pp. 112–113.

[4] F. C. Burkitt, Evangelion da-Mepharreshe (Cambridge, 1904), vol. ii, p. 301; cf. Jeremias, Eucharistic Words, p. 89.

[5] J. T. S. n.s. I (1950), p. 202.

must presuppose an original shorter text of the form attested in D *a d ff*^{2} *i l*, since the transposition of the loaf to a position before the cup would have been unnecessary if the corrector had had verse 20 in his copy of Luke. It is therefore impossible to argue, as has been attempted in a recent article by K. T. Schäfer,[6] that *b e* represented the original form of the shorter text which he claims as a secondary development intended to assimilate the authentic longer text to the Marcan and Matthaean tradition. Moreover, Schäfer's hypothesis makes the reading of D *a d ff*^{2} *i l* inexplicable; to say with him that it is a partial attempt to restore the true Lucan text is to leave unanswered the question why the harmonizing corrector did his work in so half-hearted a manner as to give the extraordinary order Cup-Loaf and to omit 19b–20. With this kind of 'explanation' the last state is worse than the first.

Accordingly, it may be taken to be highly probable that the earliest form of the shorter text consisted of 15–19a, and that the text of the Old Latin manuscripts *b e*, where the order is so transposed as to put the bread before the cup, represents the first stage of a process of correction and rationalization which is completed in the Old Syriac texts. For the purposes of this argument it matters little whether the transposition of order from Cup-Loaf to Loaf-Cup was made by the Old Syriac version in dependence upon the tradition attested in *b e* or whether the process occurred in the two textual traditions quite independently. The latter view is held, for example, by T. W. Manson (J. T. S. loc. cit.). In any event, the attestation of the shorter text is driven back to a very early date (it is hard to believe that it was not in existence before the end of the first century) and is found to be current as far afield as Western Europe, Africa, and Syria. On grounds of both time and space its witnesses command respect.

The arguments urged in favor of the originality of the shorter text may be reduced to three:

[6] 'Zur Textgeschichte von Lk. 22, 19b. 20,' in Biblica xxxiii (1952), pp. 237–239. The weakness of this note is succinctly expressed by the author himself when he writes, as if it were some claim to virtue, at p. 239: "Sie erledigt ein textgeschichtliches Problem auf rein textgeschichtliche Wege, ohne andere Gesichtspunkte zu bedürfen."

1. It conforms to the two canons of textual criticism that the more difficult reading is to be preferred, and that a shorter text is normally more likely to be original.

2. The longer text is explicable as an assimilation to I Cor. xi. 24 and the last four words of Mark xiv. 24. If it is explained as scribal assimilation, then it is in good and familiar company; it falls into the same category as several other readings given by the 'Neutral' text of Luke, namely, the so-called Western non-interpolations.

3. The style of 19b–20 is claimed to be non-Lucan in two respects:
(a) in 20b the copula ἐστίν is lacking, though it is present in Paul and its insertion would be in accordance with Lucan practice, as Burkitt showed in J.T.S. xxviii (1927), p. 180.
(b) the final nominative τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον is clumsy if intended to stand in agreement with αἵματι, and looks as if it has been taken over from a tradition with the Marcan form τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου. (No doubt this last argument carries little weight inasmuch as one can pour out either a cup or its contents.)

The arguments in favor of the longer text being original may similarly be summarized:

1. 19b–20 are not an exact assimilation to I Cor. ix. 24, nor are the last words of 20 an exact assimilation to Mark xiv. 24. Would not a corrector of the shorter text have been rather more efficient? It seems easier to explain the longer text as due to independent access on the part of Luke to the same stratum of tradition as that preserved in I Cor. xi. In Jeremias' view Luke is using a liturgical formula. It is disquieting, however, to observe that in this respect his arguments are decisively rejected by Schürmann who has an alternative hypothesis to offer (see below).

2. The longer text, giving the apparent order cup-loaf-cup may be odd, but the shorter text with cup-loaf is quite beyond belief and the abruptness of 19a is extremely difficult. Indeed, the shorter text is so incredible that some of its defenders have felt constrained to clutch at the drowning theologian's straw and have suggested that 19a is an early interpolation. But to give a text universally attested in all strands of a very diverse manuscript tradition a slash with the Marcionite penknife is a high price to pay for an intelligible text.

3. Is the shorter text quite so inexplicable? Two rival accounts of its genesis are offered by defenders of the longer text. Schürmann, having rejected Jeremias' notion that 19b–20 is pre-Lucan liturgical

tradition, suggests that the *omission* of these verses is sufficiently explained as due to liturgical tradition. He suggests that abuses such as those described in I Cor. xi led early in the second century to the separation of the eucharist from the communal meal, and that the shorter text was produced with polemical intent to deprive the conservative adherents of the old tradition of a text of the Gospel which might seem to justify eating and drinking before the eucharist; such people might have appealed to Luke xxii. 17 to show that wine could be drunk before a eucharistic meal. To the second-century reformers the words 'after supper' in xxii. 20 might seem sufficiently objectionable to justify the entire excision of the verse once they had decided to put the eucharist in the early morning. (But it is curious that there is no evidence of any tampering with the text of I Cor. xi 25 on the same grounds.)

The speculative character of Schürmann's theory makes it extremely hard to refute; yet for the same reason it is hard to prove. There is no second-century text mentioning or implying controversy concerning the transfer of the eucharist to the early morning. To that degree the argument is left in the air. And it is disturbing to note that while Schürmann discounts Jeremias' arguments that 19b–20 reflect liturgical tradition, he himself is quite content to appeal to liturgical tradition in order to explain the omission of the words. For the one scholar 'liturgical tradition' accounts for their presence in one line of tradition; for the other it accounts for their absence from another line. One begins to wonder whether liturgy is not a loosely defined concept being too casually invoked to help when the theory has run into difficulties.

The alternative to Schürmann's liturgical *deus ex machina* to explain the shorter text as secondary and to defend the longer text as authentic is the proposal of Jeremias and others to account for the abbreviated text by the notion of *disciplina arcani*. Jeremias (op. cit., E. T. pp. 72 ff.) convincingly shows that 'esoteric' notions are found not merely in the Greek world but within Palestinian Judaism. How relevant his evidence is to the Lucan institution narrative is open to question. The mysterious language of apocalyptic or the withholding of certain doctrines from the young Jew or the unworthy Gentile is a very different matter

from an interest in secrecy for its own sake. There is no idea here of the *arcanum* of the rite, say, of the Passover, but rather a proper concern to keep pearls away from swine.[7] In the apologetic of the Gentile Christian mission the claim that certain Christian doctrines are deeply mysterious possessed a propagandist value to those who were inclined to dismiss the Christian gospel as crude and simple stuff,[8] and it is in that context that such language is used by Paul in I Corinthians ii and by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In an apologist like Origen the concept of a Christian esotericism naturally plays a prominent rôle.[9] But his notions were severely criticized precisely on the ground that this was a hellenistic, not a truly biblical, idea. Methodius trenchantly observes that if the apostles really had regarded the fundamentals of the faith as an esoteric mystery they would hardly have evangelized the world.[10]

While, therefore, the advocates of the arcanist theory as a means of explaining the shorter text have a hypothesis which

[7] Jeremias, op. cit. p. 79 n. 4, is of course aware of this when he observes of the early church, that 'there is no question of the elaborate disciplina arcani of the mystery religions.' But by his use of the word 'elaborate' (ausgebildete) he insinuates the suggestion that the difference is only a slight matter of degree rather than of kind. To the Rabbinic evidence which he cites at p. 76 add the fundamental information given by Origen, Comm. in Cant. Cantic. Prol. p. 62 Baehrens: 'They say that according to Hebrew custom no one is allowed even to take this book (i.e. the Song of Songs) into his hands unless he has attained to adult and mature age. Moreover, we have been informed that they also observe this custom: while it is their habit that all the scriptures be taught by teachers and wise men to children, and also those which they call *Deuteroseis*, they reserve until last four sections, namely, the beginning of Genesis where the creation of the world is described; the beginning of the prophet Ezekiel where the cherubim are spoken of; the end where the building of the temple is mentioned; and this book of the Song of Songs.' (Origen probably derived this information from the Christian Jew who had instructed him in Hebrew and for whose expositions of the Old Testament he had so high a regard.)

[8] A spectacular instance is given by Clement of Alexandria, Strom. v. 18.3 ff. In the second book of the Stromateis Clement has tried to defend the Christian demand for faith against the criticisms of rationalist philosophy and to assert its saving value against the disparagement of the gnostics; there his main arguments are that faith is (a) a provisional or working hypothesis which subsequent experience verifies, (b) a submission to the authority of divine revelation contained in the scriptures. But in the fifth book this is suddenly cast aside in favor of the view that to demand any kind of rational argument is vulgar; the truth is highly esoteric, the prophets almost unintelligible, and Christianity a vast scheme of symbolism like Egyptian hieroglyphics, the symbols of Pythagoras, or the Mosaic tabernacle!

[9] Origen, c. Cels. iii. 44–58, vi. 13–14, and frequently.

[10] Methodius, de Creatis (p. 493 Bonwetsch) = Photius, Bibl. 235, p. 301 b, 25 ff.

cannot be said to be totally impossible, it is to protest too much to regard it as a priori probable. And it is a severe difficulty for the theory that the hypothetical abbreviator left untouched xxii. 19a containing the very *mysterium fidei*, 'This is my body.' This is a corner only to be turned with much ingenuity. Kilpatrick proposes to see in these words 'a cut which the faithful would know how to supplement, but which would tell the uninitiated little. . . . The abruptness of the ending is deliberate in order to preserve the arcanum of the rite.' [11] Modern writers tend, if anything, to suffer from exaggerated notions of the lack of intelligence discernible in early Christian literature; but even when the most generous allowances are made I cannot escape the feeling that this is over-subtle. Moreover, it seems to presuppose that the early Christians were self-conscious about the 'words of consecration' in a way that later Christians have come to be. It is an easy assumption for minds accustomed to the use of the Roman Canon or the Book of Common Prayer, but it is a false perspective if it is read back into the second century.

In the last analysis perhaps the root difficulty in the path of all defenders of the authenticity of the shorter text is simply to make sense of it. The principle *difficilior lectio potior* does not extend to nonsense, and the shorter text, though readily construable, seems as it stands an utter monstrum. This, however, is a difficulty inherent in the shorter text whether it is what Luke wrote or not. It is in part out of a sense of grateful dissatisfaction with Jeremias' defense of the longer text that the following alternative hypothesis is proposed. Compared with the learned ingenuity of Schürmann and Jeremias it can only seem bucolic in its rough and unpolished simplicity, and may deserve to be rejected out of hand for its sheer crudity. But the problem of the shorter text is so acute on any existing theory that perhaps even a crude hypothesis is worth looking at.

The hypothesis, first of all, requires the far from original notion that in Luke xxii.15–18 we have an account of the Last Supper which in essentials came to the evangelist quite independently of the Marcan tradition. Whether it describes a Passover meal or

[11] J.T.S. XLVII (1946), p. 53.

not may here be left an open question. More important for our purposes is its theological content. The theme of this account is that the Christian supper is a foretaste of that great and heavenly banquet,[12] for admission to which the believer prayed in the Lord's Prayer in the petition 'Grant us to eat bread in the age to come,' [13] and at which the urgent cry 'Marana tha' was felt to be so essential to the rite (I Cor.xvi.22) that even the Greek-speaking communities continued to use the Aramaic words. Formally this independent account is marked by an obvious parallelism between the two declarations that Jesus will not eat (again?) nor drink the cup (again?) until the fulfilment in the heavenly messianic feast. Here we may leave on one side the theological problems involved in the question whether these words imply a refusal to eat and drink with the disciples [14] or rather an actual sharing of the meal by Jesus himself.[15] For our argument here the crux of the matter is one respect in which the parallelism in the language is not rigid. The second declaration of xxii.17 explicitly men-

[12] As in Luke xxii. 30 'that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.'

[13] This is the exegesis considered but then rejected by Origen, de Oratione xxvii. 13 (p. 372 Koetschau). From the manner in which it is first presented and subsequently discarded in favor of a more elaborate interpretation I should conclude that it was probably a traditional exegesis already current in the church, which Origen felt himself bound to record out of respect for his predecessors before going on to give the interpretation which his own insight and inspiration had led him to accept. Origen does not explicitly say that it is traditional, and of course it may be simply a possible line of thought which occurred to him independently. Moreover, his words in Hom. in Jerem. xi.3 (p. 80 Klostermann) seem to imply that in such cases he felt some obligation to acknowledge his sources: 'This has also been expounded by others before us; and since we do not reject their exposition we candidly and openly quote it, not as if we found it out for ourselves but as having received good teaching.' But in that passage he accepts the tradition, whereas in de Orat. xxvii.13 he sets it aside. And there are good analogies elsewhere in his writings for this technique; e.g. the exegesis of the triumphal entry and the cleansing of the temple in the Commentary on St. John, x.29, where the colt and the foal of an ass are the Jewish and Gentile churches drawing the triumphal chariot of Jesus (cf. H.T.R. xlix.3, July 1956, p. 148), is already found in Clement, Protr. 121.1. Again, the exegesis of 'Render unto Caesar' in the Commentary on St. Matthew, xvii. 27, to the effect that we must give the body its due in food, clothing, and sleep so far as that is necessary for health while giving the soul, as God's image, what is fitting to its nature, is also found in the Gnomes of Sextus, 19–20 ed. Elter, and in Clement, Ecl. Proph. 24. In both these examples Origen treats the exegesis as 'possible,' but there is no explicit reference to a predecessor. If the exegesis of *epiousios* in de Orat. xxvii.13 is earlier than Origen, it could be old; but how far back it goes it is of course impossible to say.

[14] Cf. D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (1956), pp. 330–331.

[15] Cf. T. W. Manson in J.T.S. n.s. I (1950), p. 203.

tions "a cup," whereas the first declaration of xxii.15 does not mention the loaf at all but rather the *pascha*. The phrase to "eat the *pascha*" is odd. According to Septuagintal usage the *pascha* is either "sacrificed" or "done"; it is not "eaten," though eating and drinking formed so important a part of the rite. The word *pascha* refers to the totality of the rite, and it is surprising to find in Luke's text that *pascha* can be set in antithesis to the cup which formed a part of it. Bultmann has suggested that originally the narrative spoke of the bread and not the *pascha* in 15, and that the reference to the passover was added by a reviser of the material (Luke himself?) who wanted to present the Last Supper as a passover meal.[16] Whether this be so or not, I am inclined to suggest that it is the absence of any explicit mention of the bread in 15 which accounts for the shorter reading of 19–20; that is to say, that the evangelist misunderstood the purport of the document (or oral tradition) transmitted to him and failed to perceive that in xxii.15 the bread is in fact there by implication. In his source he found an unambiguous mention of the cup. The only point, therefore, at which the source needed to be supplemented was by the simple addition of some words about the bread. Accordingly he bluntly, perhaps even gauchely, appended 19a adapted from the Marcan tradition.

The result of this operation was to produce the extraordinary confusion of the shorter text. It would, however, be hasty to draw the conclusion that the evangelist did not know what he was about. The main difficulty is to see why, if he wished to supplement the supposed deficiency of his source, he did not insert the Marcan words about the bread, with *hoc est corpus meum*, before the cup of 17–18, where in fact *b e* and the old Syriac texts place them. The answer must be that the evangelist felt it necessary to preserve the parallelism of 15–16 and 17–18 which in that event would have been wholly dislocated. The reason why he tacked the Marcan words rather loosely on at the end rather than conflate the sources is not a confused state of mind but respect (characteristically Lucan?) for his non-Marcan material.

[16] Bultmann, Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition[2], (1931), p. 286. He cuts the Gordian knot by regarding the whole of 19–20, including 19a, as interpolated. The view I have expressed above differs of course in the all-important respect that 19a is understood as an 'interpolation' on the part of the evangelist himself.

On this interpretation of the evidence it was the third evangelist himself who initiated a long development of correction and expansion. Luke not merely opened the door to the supplement which added the second cup, he made its eventual addition inevitable.

If the arcanist theory seems to presuppose an over-ingenious and sophisticated scribe, the hypothesis here submitted may seem far more open to objection in that it seems to presuppose an excessively stupid evangelist. I should not for one moment accept the view that the hypothesis demanded this corollary. But it may be freely admitted that it raises sharply the all too familiar issue whether the third gospel is to be regarded as the delicate work of a fine theological artist to whom creative inspiration may be readily attributed, or whether it is rather a literary Pisa Cathedral in which many pre-existing bits and pieces have been put together for admitted theological purposes to form a coherent structure which, nevertheless, is not so coherent as to make it quite impossible to discern some of the original blocks that have gone to its making.[17]

[17] Cf. W. L. Knox, The Sources of the Synoptic Gospels, vol. ii (1957), p. 138 and passim.

THEMISTIUS AND THE DEFENSE OF HELLENISM IN THE FOURTH CENTURY *

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In part, perhaps, because of the lack of a modern edition — the most recent, Wilhelm Dindorf's text of 1832, has become extremely scarce — Themistius' orations, and their significance in the religious and intellectual history of the fourth century, have not been as well known as they should be. It is hoped that a new edition may be forthcoming before long.[1] In the meantime the present study will offer some observations on Themistius' writings which will suggest some of his significance in the general picture of the fourth century. Incidentally the writer will venture to point out various passages which suggest that Themistius had some knowledge of the Christian scriptures, especially the New Testament.

Themistius spent his career as orator, teacher and philosopher at the courts of the emperors of the eastern part of the Roman Empire from the time of Constantius (337–361) to the reign of Theodosius I (379–395).[2] He was born about 317 and died in 388. Thus he was twenty years old at the death of Constantine the Great, and was thirteen or fourteen years older than Julian, who was later to become emperor. Themistius was three years younger than Libanius, who pursued his career in Antioch while Themistius was working in Constantinople. Themistius

* The present study formed one of the Bedell Lectures which I delivered in December, 1956, at the kind invitation of Bexley Hall, the Divinity School of Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. I take this occasion to express once more my gratitude to the officers of Kenyon College for their invitation to deliver the Bedell Lectures, and for their hospitality.

[1] Heinrich Schenkl was preparing a new edition which remained unfinished at his death. The present writer has carried on this work, and it is hoped that a new text, with translation and commentary, may be published soon.

[2] On Themistius' life and writings see W. Stegemann, "Themistios," RE VA (1934), 1642–1680. Stegemann establishes a chronology of the orations which differs from the numeration adopted by Dindorf in his edition, but in the present study references will be given according to Dindorf's text, except in the case of Or. XXXIV, in which the pagination of both A. Mai's editio princeps and Dindorf's edition will be given.

was a man of private fortune who decided to pursue a career of teaching and public oratory. He was able to gain the interest and support of the Emperor Constantius with his first major public address, delivered before the emperor in the year 350, when Themistius was about thirty-three, and the imperial favor started him on an active and fruitful career. He has been best known among scholars for the Paraphrases of Aristotle which he wrote in an effort to make the Aristotelian teaching more accessible to people in general. He also wrote a number of orations (some of which we would call essays), of which over thirty-five are preserved. These are mostly political, though a number are philosophical and literary, and many of them deal with his theories of education and his attacks on the educational methods of the sophists and rhetoricians whom he regarded as his rivals and enemies.[3] Since Dindorf's edition was published, several orations have been discovered in Syriac or Arabic versions, the Greek originals having been lost; and there is also preserved among Themistius' works an oration of the Emperor Constantius, addressed to Themistius, a work of unusual interest as showing the influence of Themistius' political ideas on Constantius, or at least on Constantius' official utterances.[4]

Themistius may be taken as typifying one of the various possible ways in which pagans reacted to Christianity when it became officially recognized in the fourth century. One well known example, typical of many pagans, was Themistius' contemporary Libanius, who at least in his voluminous writings (including a quantity of private letters) simply ignored Christianity.[5] One would hardly know, from his works, that it existed; along the same lines, he makes little reference to the Roman rule or the Latin language. Libanius attempted all his life to live and work as a Hellene of the old stock, carrying on his teaching in Antioch

[3] See further my studies "Education and Public Problems as Seen by Themistius," Trans. Amer. Philol. Assoc. LXXXVI (1955), 291–307, and "Education in the Christian Roman Empire," Speculum XXXII (1957) 48–61.

[4] The significance of Themistius' orations in the history of imperial political theory will be studied in detail by Professor F. Dvornik in his study of political theory which is now in progress.

[5] On Libanius' career, see the recent study by P. Petit, Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IVe siècle après J.-C. (Paris, 1955; Inst. Franç. d'Archéol. de Beyrouth, Bibl. archéol. et histor. LXII).

as though he were living in the golden days of ancient Athens.

Another type of reaction was that of the Emperor Julian (361–363), whose passionate opposition to Christianity illustrates the extreme form of the pagan hatred of the Christian way. Julian, as a philosopher and man of letters who was also an able administrator, hoped both to do away with Christianity, and to make a new synthesis of pagan thought and religion which would take the place of the Galilean religion, as he called it. He also planned and tried to put into effect an extensive reform of the government and of political life, in an effort to counteract the political and economic effects of the policies of Constantine the Great and his successors. Julian's campaign was an all-out effort to save the state which, he believed, was being threatened by the Christian faith. Christianity meant, to Julian, that the old Roman gods, whose favor had made the Roman Empire great, would be alienated and would withdraw their protection.[6]

The third type of reaction was that of Themistius. His purpose, stated briefly, was to show that Hellenism was at least as good as Christianity, if not better in many ways. He did not attack Christianity directly, and this was wise, for he was able to maintain a prominent position in public life and at the imperial court for forty years, and finally was appointed tutor to the older son of the most Christian Emperor Theodosius, a signal honor for a pagan. Instead, Themistius tried, in what may be regarded as a very subtle and practical way, to present a pagan social and political program which paralleled the Christian doctrine and, in Themistius' estimation and that of his peers, improved on it. The obvious conclusion, which Themistius left unspoken, was that much of Christianity was imitated from paganism, and the inference was that the intelligent person ought to

[6] Julian's attitude toward the Roman gods is reflected in such passages as Contra Galileos 218a–b, 230a, 238d; Misopogon 345b–c, cf. 357c–d; Caesars 320a–322a, 329b–d, 336a–b (these three passages should be read all together); see also the study by F. Dvornik, "The Emperor Julian's 'Reactionary' Ideas on Kingship," Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of A. M. Friend Jr. (Princeton 1955) 71–81. The present writer hopes to study elsewhere the evidence (in part numismatic) that Julian's program was basically a reaction against the Constantinian economic and administrative policies. On the growing interest in this part of Julian's program, see K. F. Stroheker, "Das konstantinische Jahrhundert," Saeculum III (1953), 676.

prefer the genuine article. It seems clear that Themistius had some knowledge of Christianity, though his remaining a pagan shows that he obviously did not understand the real significance of its teaching. It is well known that Themistius quotes with approval on three occasions[7] the saying of Proverbs XXI, 1, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord," on one occasion substituting "mind" for "heart." Themistius quotes this phrase from what he calls "the books of the Assyrians," the word Assyrians in contemporary usage meaning Hebrews. All these quotations occur in discussions of the qualities of the ideal emperor, the first two being in orations addressed to Valens, the third in an oration to Theodosius. Other possible allusions to Christian scripture have been less well known. Later in Oration VII (97d) — the oration in which Proverbs is first quoted — Themistius speaks of the emperor blessing a man who reviled him, using almost the same words as I Cor. IV, 12. Just before this passage (Or. VII, 95a) he quotes the so-called Silver Rule of Plato, about doing good to enemies as well as to friends,[8] in a context which seems to indicate that Themistius was trying to show that the pagans had a valid parallel to the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. Plato's Silver Rule is also mentioned in another oration.[9] Thus there are three passages in Oration VII (addressed to Valens) which seem to be allusions to Christian writings. In another Oration (XXI, 258a) Themistius makes a sarcastic reference to the teaching quoted in Exodus XX, 5 and elsewhere[10] concerning the visiting of the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. Themistius' words seem to indicate that Christian teachers were claiming that this doctrine was found in Plato as well as in the Bible, an assertion which Themistius greets with scorn, such a teaching being unworthy, he implies, of pagan philosophy. There is a very striking passage in Oration I, addressed to the Emperor Constantius, which seems to contain a supercilious allusion to the Arian controversy — about which it would

[7] Orations VII, 89d; XI, 147c; XIX, 229a.
[8] Plato, Republic 332a–335a; Crito 49a ff.
[9] Or. XXXIV, p. 68 Mai, p. 468 Dindorf.
[10] Exod. XXXIV, 7; Num. XIV, 18; Deut. V, 9.

be very easy for a pagan to be supercilious. Themistius has been speaking of the epithets which should be applied to "the king of heaven" — that is, the supreme monotheistic deity in whom Themistius and his pagan contemporaries believed — and he goes on (Or. I, 8a–b):

> If justice consists of the making of covenants and the maintenance of relations with those who are in agreement with us, how could there be any stain, in this respect, on the life of him who is above all contracts? But as I said, we consider these names unworthy of God, as being trifling and inferior; but when we call him [God] lover of mankind we do him no dishonor. The reason for this is that the mind of man is so made as to consider beneath himself everything which he can find in something which proceeds from himself. Thus our mind ascribes supersubstantial substance and power of higher power and superlatively good goodness to the fount of all things (. . . *οὐσίαν τε ὑπερούσιον καὶ ὑπερδύναμον δύναμιν καὶ ὑπεράγαθον ἀγαθότητα* . . .) but does this hesitantly, and takes care over the association of the words.

A little later in the same oration (10a–b), Themistius speaks of the Good Shepherd — meaning the Emperor, to whom this epithet had been given in Hellenistic political theory — in words which could be taken to mean that he was acquainted with the description of the Good Shepherd in the Gospel of John, X; the verbal resemblances, at least, are very striking. Finally, Themistius uses the phrase (Or. XXI, 259a) "Greeks and barbarians," meaning all peoples, in the way in which it is employed in Romans I, 14, though this need not be a reminiscence of the passage in Romans, since the phrase occurs in this sense in Plato and Isocrates,[11] from whom Themistius could very easily have borrowed it. In one place (Or. I, 9b) he speaks of the king making his soul into an "image of God" (*εἰκόνα θεοῦ*), and in another passage (Or. XI, 143a) he writes of the earthly kingdom as an image, *eikon*, of the heavenly kingdom; but the phrase *εἰκὼν θεοῦ* is so common in pagan literature that while these passages might be allusions to Christian usage, we cannot be sure of it.

Except for the quotations of Proverbs, which have been well known, these traces of knowledge of Christian doctrine on

[11] Plato, Theaet. 175a; Isocrates, Evag. XVII, 192b.

Themistius' part have not yet, so far as I know, been adduced by any student of the subject. But we do not, I think, really need to seek proof that Themistius was acquainted at least in general terms with Christian teaching and even with the Scriptures, for it would be difficult for a man placed as Themistius was to escape such knowledge. He may even have been required by the exigencies of senatorial or court ceremonial to attend Christian religious services on public occasions, at which the emperor was present in an official capacity.

Certainly we could hardly expect Themistius to have embarked on any such program as he undertook, without some knowledge of Christianity. It is the program itself which primarily concerns us here. Such a major attempt as Themistius' to point out the value of paganism in a systematic and restrained fashion had not been tried as yet by the pagan apologists; and it would seem that at least he was not made to stop, for as we know he was able to keep an important position at court and in the intellectual life of Constantinople under a whole succession of Christian emperors.

Themistius' program may be regarded as dealing with two main themes, first, the value of Greek philosophy as a popular ethical system which formed the best guide to conduct, and was a way of life suitable for everybody; and second, the virtues and responsibilities of the ideal ruler, according to classical Greek political doctrine, and the nature of the ideal state which would come into being when both the people and the ruler were properly educated in the classical tradition. Within these two principal themes there were various special topics which were developed in detail; but in all of Themistius' thought there was a steady appeal to the value of the ancient tradition in literature, philosophy and statecraft. The teaching and writings of the ancient masters, especially Plato and Aristotle, by their excellence which could not be surpassed, had acquired an authority which Themistius and all others bred in the classical tradition would not think of questioning. To Christians, the matter would be, in theory at least, somewhat different; but the power of tradition was so strong, and the ancient majesty of the Roman state so venerable, that any allusion to it could not but find some re-

sponse. The Romans, in the fourth century as in earlier times, had a great respect for practical success, and Themistius made the most of his opportunities to point out the reasons for the past successes of the state.

To begin with the individual, we see that Themistius was very eager to develop and spread a popular form of Greek philosophy which could serve as a guide for daily living not only for the educated but for the masses as well. Basically, his theme, which was often repeated, was that "only philosophers are witnesses to virtue" (e.g. Or. I, 3d), for he believed very strongly, as the classical Greek philosophers had done, that virtue can be taught, and that knowledge and virtue are identical. He developed this teaching both in his orations and in the Paraphrases of Aristotle, by means of which Themistius sought to make the master's teaching available in simplified language which could be understood by non-specialists. Examination of the most prominent quotations of Plato and Aristotle in fifteen typical orations show that Plato is quoted or paraphrased sixty times, Aristotle ten times. Eight of the ten quotations of Aristotle are taken from the Nicomachean Ethics, two from the Rhetoric; and three of the eight quotations of the Nicomachean Ethics refer to the same passage (V, 8, 7, 1135b), the famous discussion of the distinction between error, wrong-doing and misadventure. One oration (XIII) is an imitation of the Phaedrus of Plato, while in another (XXXIV) Themistius has set down a summary, which is very valuable for us, of his own understanding of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Themistius believed that the people of his day were insufficiently instructed in philosophy, and he hoped to make Greek philosophy available and useful to everyone, regardless of social status (Or. XXVI, 320b–321a). In this, he pointed out, he was following the example of the ancient philosophers such as Socrates (Or. XXVIII, 341d). Themistius was criticized for this by his jealous rivals, the sophists and rhetoricians of Constantinople, who preferred to confine their teaching to select circles, from which they could draw pupils who paid good fees.[12]

The wisdom of Themistius' plan will be evident if we com-

[12] Cf. Them. Oratt. XXI, 246c–247a; XXVI, 313d–314a.

pare it with the elaborate philosophical schemes of the Emperor Julian, who set out to produce a new synthesis of the whole of ancient philosophy in which the various systems, incompatible among themselves, would be harmonized and brought together into a new and improved eclectic system which would serve as the intellectual basis for his revived pagan state, which he hoped would replace the Christian state. Julian was a very learned man — perhaps too learned — and strangely over-enthusiastic in the matter of his philosophical synthesis; and quite surprisingly so, since he was practical and successful in affairs of state. Julian's philosophical structure would have been comprehensible only among educated people, and it may be questionable whether it would have had a universal appeal to them.

Themistius was wiser, in concentrating on the ethical value of classical Greek philosophy, as represented by Plato and Aristotle, as a guide of living for the individual. It was on this basis that Themistius would have to show the merits of the Greek tradition in comparison with Christianity, and he seems to have understood that simplicity would help his effort. Among the many passages in which he deals with this subject, a few typical statements may be quoted:

> To prove that the practice of philosophy is nothing else than the exercise of virtue, listen to . . . [Aristotle] . . . If . . . he says that from performing just deeds a man becomes just, and from performing temperate acts a man becomes temperate, no one, from the non-performance of these things, would ever have the prospect of becoming a good man. Yet most people, not doing these things, take refuge in the word alone and think that they practise philosophy, acting a little like sick people who listen to the physician carefully, but carry out none of his orders, so that neither do these men, when caring for themselves in this manner, enjoy good health, nor do the former, when they practise philosophy in this way, achieve health for their souls . . . (Or. II, 31d–32a).

> This is the superiority of man, that if he has enjoyed a true education, he exhibits a divine life on earth; but if he has had a bad training, he becomes a beast more savage than bears or wild boars . . . For the sake of his education, law was invented, and the art of discovering law was itself invented. (Or. XXXIV, p. 18 Mai, p. 445 Dindorf.)

[Aristotle] teaches us that this happiness is desirable when it exists for only one man, but it is better and more perfect when it reaches a whole city. For this reason he calls his system civic, and he maintains that action finds no part in it aside from good action, and that the God who rules all, and his companions, philosophize with a practical and civic philosophy, keeping the whole of nature unswerving and uncontaminated for all time. (Or. XXXIV, p. 26 Mai, p. 449 Dindorf.)

In a number of passages [13] Themistius dwells at length on the Platonic concept of ὁμοίωσις θεοῦ, the becoming like God, or being like God, which is expressed in the Theaetetus 176b ("philosophy is nothing else than ὁμοίωσις θεοῦ so far as it is possible for man"). Themistius quotes this passage in Or. II, 32d, which was addressed to Constantius, and paraphrases or alludes to it in a number of other passages, summing up his own thought in the saying that "Plato is always exalted, and whoever is a follower of Plato pursues likeness to God" (Or. XXXIV, p. 74 Mai, p. 471 Dindorf). Here of course — quite aside from any question of Themistius' familiarity with Christian teaching — the goal of the Greek philosophical education is presented in exactly the same words as the familiar Hebrew and Christian belief in the creation of man in the likeness of God, as recorded in Genesis I, 26, and repeated in the Epistle of James, III, 9, a concept which played a prime rôle in the Christological studies of the fourth century, being developed particularly by Gregory of Nyssa. If this present view of Themistius' program is correct, this would be a significant instance of his desire to show that the pagan teaching was as exalted, and as inspiring, and productive of good ends, as the Christian teaching.

The same philosophy which should guide the individual ought also, Themistius taught, to be at the basis of the conduct of the state. He sums this up in a typical passage in terms of *philanthropia*, or love of mankind, a concept which will be examined presently. Themistius writes (Or. VI, 76c–d): "Since nature has given man the chief position of honor, far from the other animals, and has bound us, among those who surround us, to those of the same stock, the foundations have been laid at our very hearths;

[13] Cf. Them. Oratt. II, 32d (quoting Plato Theaet. 176b); VI, 78c, 79a; XV, 188b, 188d, 189a–b; XIX, 226d–227a; XXXIV, p. 74 Mai, p. 471 Dindorf.

and after the man who loves his brothers, there follows the man who loves his family; after the man who loves his family, there follows the man who loves his fatherland; and the man who loves his fatherland is succeeded by the one who loves mankind."

It was the state, rather than the individual, which occupied the chief place in Themistius' thoughts. Many of his orations are wholly concerned with the qualities and virtues desirable in the ruler, the kind of education which was necessary to prepare the ideal ruler, and the happy effects for the commonwealth of the right conjunction of all these factors. Themistius' orations in fact occupy a very distinguished place in the long line of treatises on the education of the perfect prince, and it is here, I think, that he may have made his most important contribution to the defense of Hellenism.

As we would expect, Themistius was careful to bring out, in all his discussions of the subject, the virtues and qualities, intellectual and moral, which the ideal ruler ought to possess. These were, *mutatis mutandis*, the same as those which Christians would look upon as necessary for a Christian ideal ruler — justice, clemency, moderation, bravery, fortitude, and so on. In addition, however, Themistius offered a new element, pagan in terminology, by developing the theme of *philanthropia*, love of mankind, as the supreme and indispensable quality of the ruler. The presentation of this idea was basic to Themistius' effort to show that Hellenism was a fundamental ingredient in the imperial office.[14]

The essential characteristics of the ruler, as Themistius listed them, are those which would be familiar to all students, ancient and modern, of political theory as it was worked out in the tradition associated with Plato and Aristotle and later Greek thinkers. The ruler's qualities — justice, clemency, and so on, which have just been mentioned — would give him a concern for the welfare and happiness of the people, who would then look upon the ruler as upon a father (cf. e.g. Or. I, 5d–6a). A favorite phrase which Themistius quotes frequently is Plato's saying (Laws 709e, 710c) that "life achieves its best and its happiest when there is a ruler who is young, temperate, with a good memory,

[14] See further in my study "Philanthropia in Religion and Statecraft in the Fourth Century after Christ," Historia IV (1955) 199–208.

brave, of a noble manner, quick to learn." [15] Like the Christian emperor in Eusebius' theory, the Roman emperor according to Themistius' view was chosen by God — that is, by the monotheistic supreme being in whom Themistius and most of the educated pagans then believed (Or. II, 34a–d). In fact the emperor is defined (Or. I, 9b) as the image and counterpart of God. Themistius declares, of the emperor, that "the man who, more than the rest of mortals, is able to accomplish good, and chooses to do so, is a pure and complete image of God (εἰκὼν θεοῦ) and is the same thing on earth as he [God] is in heaven, governing, as it were, an allotment of the whole realm, and striving to imitate, in part, the ruler of the whole" (Or. I, 9b). A pagan writer could not set up a much closer parallel than this with the Christian formulation of the nature of the ruler and his duties. But to Themistius, of course, this is an ancient concept which he states elsewhere (Or. II, 34d) in the terms used by Homer, to whom kings were "God-nourished and God-begotten and equal to God in wisdom." [16]

The earthly education of this ruler, Themistius continually points out, must be based upon philosophy — that is, of course, Greek philosophy, though Themistius naturally uses only the term *philosophia*. Plato's teaching, that the true ruler and the philosopher must work together if the state is to reach its highest form,[17] is an idea to which Themistius returns constantly (cf. Or. II, 34b), praising the emperors either because they held philosophy and philosophers in honor, or because they were philosophers themselves (Or. XVII passim, Or. XXXI passim). Theodosius is described as a "philosopher in the purple," like the earlier emperor Marcus Aurelius (Or. XXXIV, p. 34 Mai, p. 453 Dindorf). Oration XXXI, addressed to Theodosius, lists the emperor's predecessors who excelled as rulers because of their devotion to *philosophia*, namely Constantius, Julian, Valens, Gratianus (354d). The memory of the apostate Julian was hardly pleasing to Christians in Theodosius' day, but it was char-

[15] Cf. Them. Oratt. III, 46a; IV, 62a; VIII, 105b, 119d; XVII, 215b–c; XXXIV, p. 50 Mai, p. 461 Dindorf.

[16] Iliad II, 169, 407, 636; X, 137. See also Them. Oratt. I, 6b; XI, 143a.

[17] Plato, Republic 473c–d, 510e; Politicus 259b, 266c.

acteristic of Themistius, as well as bold, to give the appearance of taking it for granted that one would list Julian among the philosopher emperors, and that Theodosius would be pleased by being mentioned in the same company. This is one of the cases in which Themistius sought to give currency to an idea by appearing to assume blandly that everybody thought that way, when in reality they may not have done so. When the imputation is sufficiently flattering, this device may have a considerable degree of success.

A ruler who is a philosopher is far from being merely an intellectual ornament, for it is by the wisdom and eloquence that he gains from philosophy, Themistius points out, that an emperor is able to achieve success in defending the empire against its enemies, a success which mere force of arms could not always bring about (see for example Orations X and XIII, passim). Thus it was possible to settle the barbarian invaders peacefully within the empire and to employ them profitably and humanely as farmers (Or. XIII, 176c–d), instead of destroying them. Here of course Themistius could call attention to the value of Greek philosophy in that it made it possible to achieve such a peaceful and fruitful solution of the barbarian problem, which had become a very serious one. Everyone knew, what Themistius of course could not say in so many words, that the Roman Empire was no longer able to rely on its military strength (combined on occasion with diplomacy and bribery) to keep the barbarians in check; and so here once more Themistius was able to point to the practical value of Greek philosophy in providing the ruler with the means for his strength and success.

One final point has to do with what might be regarded as Themistius' most characteristic contribution, namely his highly significant handling of the concept of *philanthropia*, love of mankind, which has already been mentioned. He presents this as the prime desideratum for all human beings, whether as private individuals, as members of society, or as rulers. This universal aspect of *philanthropia* is summed up in the passage in Or. VI (76c–d) which has been quoted: ". . . the foundations have been laid at our very hearths; and after the man who loves his brothers, there follows the man who loves his fatherland; and

the man who loves his fatherland is succeeded by the one who loves mankind."

In classical Greek usage, *philanthropia* had been employed to describe the love of gods for men, and later the love of men for one another. The Stoics, with their humanitarian interests, brought *philanthropia* into prominence, and the Stoic interest in the word is thought to have been in part responsible for the adoption of the term in Christian usage, though it was such a well known philosophic conception that no specific line of transition need be sought. The word had also gained currency in the Septuagint, where it was used to describe the qualities of the just man and of the kind man. On the other hand, the term occurs only three times in the New Testament, twice with reference to another meaning, that of hospitality (Acts XXVII, 3; XXVIII, 2), once to describe love of mankind on the part of God (Titus III, 4).

Christian writers trained in the classical tradition naturally began to employ this well known classical term, sometimes using it as the equivalent of *agape*, the common term for love in the New Testament. Thus Clement of Alexandria uses *philanthropia* to describe man's love of God, and the love of man for man, speaking of "the perfect man" as being a "lover of men." [18] By the fourth century the term is common in Christian usage. In some cases it seems actually to have replaced *agape* in literary usage, and it is one of the commonest attributes of God in the Greek liturgies. In his triumphant eulogy of the liberated church, at the end of the Ecclesiastical History, Eusebius uses the word four times, in the final chapter of his history, but never speaks of *agape*.[19] Of course *philanthropia* had a dignified, rather professional philosophical sound, which the homely and not very aristocratic *agape* did not have. However, there is no hymn in praise of *philanthropia* comparable to Paul's description of *agape* in I Cor. 13.

This was the ancestry, and the current history, of the term which Themistius undertook to develop as the epitome of all the

[18] Strom. VII, 3, 19, 1, p. 14, 4 ed. Stählin; VII, 9, 53, 5, p. 40, 2. See further my article on *philanthropia*, cited above, n. 14.

[19] Euseb. Eccl. hist. X, 9.

classical virtues and the highest quality of the ruler. Themistius' development of the term in this fashion seems to have been his own; at least there does not appear to be any comparable emphasis on it in contemporary pagan writers like Libanius, Julian and Sallustius, and Synesius of Cyrene in his pagan period. These writers all employ the word *philanthropia* occasionally, but they do not make it into a doctrine and an ideal, as Themistius does. And beyond pointing out the significance of the term as one which embraced all other good qualities, Themistius gave it a special meaning in two senses. First, he endowed it with special prominence among the traditional set of virtues such as those which Eusebius had envisaged in his conception of the Christian ideal ruler, for Eusebius had mentioned *philanthropia* only in passing, and had not given a position of prominence to any comparable term.[20] In this respect, consequently, Themistius was able to suggest that the pagan view of the ideal ruler was superior to the Christian theory. Again, Themistius was able to use the term as a watchword of a humane and also eminently practical policy toward the barbarians, whose pressure on the frontiers of the empire constituted a major political problem. In this sense, Themistius could point out that the emperor who was a lover of mankind would be merciful to the barbarians and would receive them within the empire and turn them into useful elements among the Roman people.

Throughout all these statements of Themistius, his Christian hearers would be well aware, of course, that Themistius was dealing with a Greek philosophical term which the Christians themselves had taken over. In Themistius' plan for presenting the values of paganism, this would be an important factor.

Finally, Themistius was careful to point out that *philanthropia*, the greatest of the imperial virtues, was to be, and in fact could be, developed only by the classical education. He says in an address to the Emperor Valens (Or. XI, 144d–145a):

I have often reflected that there is no other cause for that love of mankind (*philanthropia*) of yours, which is so widely celebrated, than love of literature (*philologia*) and the desire to listen to it. That man, in-

[20] For Eusebius' conception of *philanthropia* as a characteristic of the ruler, see Triakontaeterikos II, 5, p. 200, 12 ed. Heikel.

deed, who loves learning must perforce love men as well, just as, if a man admired swiftness, he must also admire horses. . . And it is clear that the man who sets great store by wisdom, and ever exalts it and makes it sit beside him, will naturally love and make much of this creature in which alone God has planted the seeds of wisdom.

And so it is a ruler with this quality, and educated in this tradition, who is able to provide for the safety and the happiness of the Roman state. I believe that it is here that one of Themistius' greatest services lies, namely in tying up Hellenism with political problems and the doctrine of the ideal ruler, and in showing how rulership and citizenship had both been one of the greatest concerns of the Greek philosophers, and how, in the fourth century, the ideal of statecraft still had its roots in the Greek tradition, and how this Greek tradition had produced the highest type of Roman emperor. This gave a practical scope to Themistius' arguments which mere praises of Greek philosophy and literature would not have had.

To us, with our wisdom of hindsight, and our Christian knowledge and conviction, Themistius' effort to compete with Christianity may seem a vain and academic effort. Like Julian and other pagans, even the most intelligent, Themistius had no notion, I am sure, that Plato's teaching, noble as it was, fell far short of Christianity. Themistius could not understand the unique power of Christianity, and so was unable to realize that, as Karl Holl observed, "the power of a religion never lies in what it has in common with others, but in what is peculiar to itself." [21] Themistius knew only the power of Hellenism, and I think that quite honestly and sincerely he believed that this was the greatest form of philosophy (philosophy being a term which to Themistius included religion and the ideal conception of the state as well). Themistius' joining of Hellenism with the theory of imperial power is one of the most important features of his work, and shows us what was really at stake in his mind and in the minds of his pagan contemporaries. The problem that Themistius and the others had to face was not simply religious and philosophical.

[21] See K. Holl, The Distinctive Elements in Christianity, transl. by N. V. Hope (Edinburgh 1937), 14.

The problem to them was political, for to the pagans, just as much as to the Christians, religion, literature and education were all bound up together, and were at the base of both social and political activities and responsibilities. Thus when we speak of "Hellenism" and "Christianity" of this period we mean a great deal more than Hellenic philosophy and Christian religion.

It is not always as easy as we may think it is to try to put ourselves in the place of the people of those days; but I like to think that by his careful and restrained teaching, keeping the Greek tradition always before his distinguished audiences, aided by his persuasive style — always a telling factor in the Graeco-Roman world — Themistius performed a real service in the defense of Hellenism and helped assure its place in the new Christian intellectual tradition. His work indicates I think how inevitable was the passage of something of the Greek tradition into Christianity. It is also one distinctive demonstration, among many others, of the power of Christianity and the inevitability of its triumph.

For the ultimate significance of such things as Themistius' work I think we have to look to the remarkable history of the Byzantine Empire, which maintained itself so long and so successfully in the East while the Roman Empire in the West gave way before the barbarians whom the Byzantines had repulsed. Various reasons for the survival of the Eastern Empire have been advanced by different scholars, but this is not the place to review the question. Some students, however, feel that one major factor in the stability and the continuity in the Roman East was its preservation and cultivation of its intellectual Greek heritage, which gave it a focal point for its national pride which supplemented its central and basic devotion to the church, which became as we know an object of intense loyalty. In Themistius and the other pagans of his time we can see the roots of this heritage which survived down to the fall of Constantinople in 1453, and, in different forms, down to the present day.

DANTE AND THE PAULINE MODES OF VISION

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St. Paul, the "great vessel of the Holy Spirit" as Dante calls him (Par. XXI, 127–8), expanding the famous epithet of Acts, IX, 15, had the most famous if not the earliest Christian mystical experience. This is the experience he describes in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians and it was to be the point of departure and reference for much of later mystical and theological speculation. St. Paul describes his rapture as follows: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;), such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter." [1]

The question arose as to the precise nature of St. Paul's rapture. Did St. Paul actually see God in his essence and nature? Or was he granted a vision of many divine things short of a direct and immediate vision of God? Indeed, can any man in this life attain to that beatific vision, even for an instant, which is the prerogative of the angels and saints? In the fourth century, St. Gregory Nazianzen decided that no man in this life could know what God is in his essence and nature. This would only be possible after our mortal minds have been divinized, after the image or copy which is the mind has ascended to its divine exemplar. Indeed, the very question widely discussed among the theologians turns on the proposition that we are sometime going to know as we are known. In this mortal life all we get of God is as a narrow rivulet, or a small ray of that great light. Therefore all claims, including scriptural ones, of having seen God are to be interpreted in some

[1] 2 Cor. XII, 2–4. I cite, as always in this article, the English of the Authorized Version. The Vulgate has: "Scio hominem in Christo ante annos quatuordecim (sive in corpore nescio, sive extra corpus nescio, Deus scit), raptum hujusmodi usque ad tertium caelum. Et scio hujusmodi hominem (sive in corpore, sive extra corpus, nescio, Deus scit), quoniam raptus est in paradisum, et audivit arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui."

relative way, as a greater participation in what others receive less of.[2]

St. Gregory Nazianzen alludes to another famous Pauline text concerning knowledge of God in this world and the next: "For now we see as through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even also as I am known," [3] and uses St. Paul himself as an authority against the possibility of seeing the divine essence while still in this life.

The Pauline text just cited was eventually interpreted with the aid of another one from Romans: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." [4] These two texts were related by equating *speculum* with *creatura mundi*. The created world was a mirror of God, and everything in it reflected in some degree, by analogy, some aspect of the Creator. This is the knowledge whereby we glimpse the cause in its effects, for the similitude of the cause shines through the effects.[5] *Speculatio*, seeing God through his creatures, is a

[2] St. Gregory Nazianzen, Oratio XVIII, Theologica II, c. xvii; P.G. 36, 47c & 49A. I cite the Latin translation of the original Greek of the Migne edition. "Quid tandem Deus natura sua et essentia sit, nec hominum quisquam unquam invenit, nec invenire potest. An vero aliquando sit inventurus, quaerat hoc qui volet, ac perscrutetur. Mea quidem sententia, tum demum hoc inveniet, cum deiforme hoc atque divinum, id est, mens nostra et ratio cum natura cognata conjuncta fuerit, et imago ad exemplar illud suum, cujus nunc desiderio tangitur, ascenderit. Atque illud mihi esse videtur, quod primarium philosophiae caput est, nempe nos aliquandodtantum cognituros, quantum cogniti sumus. [I Cor. XIII, 12] At in hac mortali vita quidquid ad nos usque pertingit, aliud nihil est, quam exiguus quidam rivulus, ac velut parvus magnae lucis radius. Quamobrem si quis Deum cognovit, aut, Scriptura teste, cognovisse dicitur, eatenus cognovisse censendus est, quatenus uberioris splendoris particeps sit, quam qui minus luminis divinitus accepit. Ita exsuperantia haec, perfecta cognitio existimata est, non ad rei ipsius veritatem, sed ad aliorum modulum et facultatem perpensa."

[3] 1 Cor XIII, 12. The Vulgate is: "Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem. Nunc cognosco ex parte; tunc autem cognoscam sicut et cognitus sum."

[4] Romans I, 20. Vulgate: "Invisibilia enim ipsius, a creatura mundi, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur: sempiterna quoque ejus virtus, et divinitas."

[5] Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, who concurs with St. Augustine on this definition: Summa theologiae, 2–2 q.180 a.3 ad 2: "(Utrum ad vitam contemplativam pertineant diversi actus.) Ad secundum dicendum quod sicut dicit glossa Augustini ibidem [De Trinitate XIV, c.6; P.L. 42 col. 1076] *speculantes dicit a speculo, non a specula*. Videre autem aliquid per speculum est videre causam per effectum in quo aius similtudo relucet. Unde *speculatio* ad meditationem redici videtur." All references to St. Thomas' Summae are to the Leonine edition. The word speculation

natural process in which all men share and it simply requires a clear head, not sanctity nor any special grace.

In the sixth century, the enormous weight of the authority of St. Gregory the Great was placed in support of the view that no man can see God in His essence in this life. Even if there are certain individuals living in the corruptible flesh who attained an incalculable power through the piercingness of their contemplation so that they were able to see the eternal brightness of God, this is not to be understood as being at variance with the words of Job that "Wisdom is hidden from the eyes of all the living." He who sees Wisdom dies to life and is not held by the love of life. The very circumstance of seeing God is death, for whether by the intention of the heart or by active carrying out, he who sees is separated with all his mind from the gratifications of this life. Hence it was said to Moses "No man shall see me and live," which is to say that no man ever sees God spiritually and lives to the world carnally. Whence St. Paul, who saw the invisible things of God, in part, died to the world.[6] This argument is ambiguous and permits of a twofold interpretation. It would seem as if Gregory were allowing that some might see God in some special way, but he seems to exclude Moses and St. Paul from any essential vision of God. The problem rests on what St. Gregory means by seeing the eternal brightness of God.[7]

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thus derives from "mirror," not from "watchtower." This is the way of knowledge of God possible to fallen man who needs a kind of mirror to see Him, the creatures which God created.

[6] St. Gregory the Great, Moralium libri sive expositio in librum b. Job, Librum XVIII, c.liv, n.89; P.L. 76, col. 95 A–B: Sin vero a quibusdam potest in hac adhuc corruptibili carne viventibus, sed tamen inaestimabili virtute crescentibus, quodam contemplationis acumine aeterna Dei claritas videri; hoc quoque a beati Job sententia non abhorret, qui ait: *Abscondita est ab oculis omnium viventium*; quoniam quisquis sapientiam, quae Deus est, videt, huic vitae funditus moritur, ne jam eius amore teneatur. Nullus quippe eam vidit, qui adhuc carnaliter vivit, quia nemo potest Deum simul amplecti et saeculum. Qui enim Deum videt, eo ipse moritur, quo vel intentione cordis vel effectu operis ab hujus vitae delectationibus tota mente separatur. Unde adhuc ad eumdem quoque Moysen dicitur: *Non enim videbit me homo, et vivet* (Exod. XXXIII, 21). Ac si aperte diceretur: Nullus unquam Deum spiritualiter videt, et mundo carnaliter vivit. Unde Paulus quoque apostolus, qui adhuc Dei invisibilia, sicut ipse testatur, ex parte cognoverat (I Cor. XIII, 12), jam huic mundo totum se mortuum esse perhibebat, dicens: *Mihi mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo* (Galat. VI, 14).

[7] On this question see Dom Cuthbert Butler, Western Mysticism, 2nd ed., London, 1927, pp. 125–133, who argues that this passage represents an inconsistency

Whatever St. Gregory may have meant in this passage, the main direction of this thought is clear. The mist of human corruption obscures the incorruptible light and makes it inaccessible to our vision. The very fact that this light can in part be seen and simultaneously not be seen is simply a measure of how distant it is from us.[8] Similarly, commenting on Ezekiel II,1 (A.V.I,28), the phrase, "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord," St. Gregory is careful to point out that Ezekiel does not say the vision of the glory but likeness of the glory. Ezekiel's intention in making this distinction was to show that no effort of the human mind, even if it represses bodily images from its thoughts, and removes from the eyes of its heart all finite spirits, can attain to a vision of the glory of God as it is while still in mortal flesh. That which shines in the mind is no more than a likeness. Thus St. Paul, who was rapt to the third heaven itself, said that we now see through a glass darkly.[9]

It is interesting to observe that, for St. Gregory, the rapture of Paul is virtually equated with the indirect vision of God *per speculum*. For him, even the ascent to the third heaven did not imply anything more than an indirect vision of God. St. Paul saw a great deal more than ordinary men see, perhaps, but his vision was still indirect.

St. Augustine, to whom we now turn and who claimed that both Moses and Paul had seen God in His essence, does not identify the vision of Paul's rapture with the indirect vision of God "as

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in St. Gregory's thought on the question and F. H. Dudden, Gregory the Great, 2 vols., London, 1905, vol. II, p. 313 ff. who claims that eternal brightness does not mean God's essence.

[8] Moralium, XXXI, 101; P.L. 76, col. 629A: "A luce enim incorruptibili caligo nos nostrae corruptionis obscurat; cumque et videri aliquatenus potest, et tamen videri lux ipsa, sicut est, non potest, quam longe sit indicat." Cf. Butler, Western Mysticism, pp. 127 ff. for more references to the "cloudy" character of contemplation in the works of St. Gregory.

[9] Homiliarum in Ezechielem prophetam libri duo, Homilia XIII, n. 30; P.L. 76, col. 868 C–D [on text: Ezek. Ch.1, vs.28 and Ch.2 vs. 1]: Non enim ait: Visio gloriae, sed similitudinis gloriae, ut videlicet ostendatur quia quantalibet se intentione mens humana tetenderit, etiamsi jam phantasias imaginum corporalium a cogitatione compescat, si jam omnes circumscriptos spiritus ab oculis cordis amoveat, adhuc tamen in carne mortali posita videre gloriam Dei non valet sicut est. Sed quidquid de illa est quod in mente resplendet, similitudo et non ipsa est. Unde et ille praedictator qui raptus usque ad tertium coelum fuerat dicebat: *Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate* (I Cor. XIII, 12).

through a glass darkly." Rather it was a vision "face to face." In this rapture St. Paul, so to speak, cancelled, by his own experience, the sharp distinction he drew between our knowledge of God in this life and in the next.

As St. Gregory the Great was the most important authority in the patristic period of those who claimed that no man in this life could see God in His essence, St. Augustine was the most important of those who claimed the opposite. But before we examine his views, let us consider still another text from St. Paul of which, as we shall see, St. Augustine makes significant use. This is also from the Second Epistle to the Corinthians and makes an important distinction between faith and vision. St. Paul says: "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)." [10] The distinction in this text, as St. Augustine interpreted it, is between knowing God through faith and knowing God in His essence. Indeed, this interpretation is quite plausible, since *species* translates the Greek *eidos* which can have the meaning essence in a philosophical context. The difference between *per fidem* and *per speciem* is parallel and analogous to the difference between *per speculum* and *facie ad faciem*. Of course, knowledge *per fidem* is a far more complete knowledge than that *per speculum*, since the created universe does not disclose the saving truths of Christian revelation upon examination. However, to know God *per speciem* would seem, for St. Augustine, to be the same as knowing Him *facie ad faciem*, that is, in His essence.

Let us now turn to the texts in which St. Augustine argues his case that God can be seen in His essence. His first example is Moses, who with St. Paul is a classic example for the discussion of this problem. Earlier, St. Gregory of Nyssa maintained that Moses had had a vision of God in His essence, and St. Augustine is probably drawing on a long tradition of speculation on this matter.[11] Moses wanted greatly to see God, not as he was seen on the mountain nor as he was seen in the temple, but in that sub-

[10] 2 Cor. V, 6–7. Vulgate: "Audentes igitur semper scientes quoniam dum sumus in corpore, peregrinamur a Domino. (Per fidem enim ambulamus, et non per speciem)."

[11] St. Gregory of Nyssa, In canticum canticorum homiliae, homilia XII; P. G.

stance by which he is God; not through any corporeal and creatural shape available to the senses, nor through any similitudes drawn from corporeal things even though seen with the spirit, but by his "species," in his essence — insofar as a rational and intellectual creature can grasp it — free of all bodily sense and all meaningful image (*aenigma*) of the spirit. In that "species" through which he is God, He speaks ineffably secretly, and immediately in an ineffable language, speaks in that place where whoever sees Him will not live with the mortal life of the bodily senses. Unless a man is in some sense dead to this life, whether wholly departed from the body as in death, or so withdrawn from it that he does not know whether he is in the body or not, he cannot be said to be lifted up and rapt to that vision.[12]

The kind of vision which Moses demanded and got was the same that St. Paul called the "third heaven." It is the highest of three forms of vision, above sensation and above spiritual vision through corporeal images. It is a purely intellectual vision in which is seen the brightness of God, not through a corporeal or even spiritual figuration as through a meaningful image (*aenigma*) in a mirror, but face to face, or, as Moses expressed it, mouth to mouth. This is the vision of God by that "species" by which God is what he is, however little the mind, even when purified of all corporeality, is able to grasp him. This is the same transcendent

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44, col. 1025B. Cf. also Joseph Maréchal, Études sur la psychologie des mystiques, 2 vols., Paris-Bruxelles, 1937, vol. 2, pp. 19 ff.

[12] St. Augustine, De genesi ad litteram, XII, c.27 n.55; P.L. 34, col. 477; cited in Enchiridion asceticum, ed. M. J. Rouët de Journel and J. Dutilleul, 4th ed., Barcelona, 1947, n. 655: "*Quo genere visionis Deus a Moyse visus.* Concupiverat enim, sicut in Exodo legimus, videre Deum; non utique sicut viderat in monte, nec sicut videbat in tabernaculo [cf. Ex. XIX, 18; XXXIII, 9], sed in ea substantia, qua Deus est, nulla assumpta corporali creatura, quae mortalis carnis sensibus praesentetur, neque in spiritu figuratis similitudinibus corporum, sed per speciem suam, quantum capere creatura rationalis et intellectualis potest, sevocata ab omni corporis sensu, ab omni significative aenigmate spiritus . . . Illo ergo modo, in illa specie, qua Deua est, longe ineffabiliter secretius et praesentius loquitur locutione ineffabili, ubi eum nemo vivens videt vita ista, qua mortaliter vivitur in istis sensibus corporis; sed nisi ab hac vita quisque quodammodo, sive omnino exiens de corpore, sive ita aversus et alienatus a carnalibus sensibus, ut merito nesciat, sicut apostolus ait, utrum in corpore an extra corpus sit [cf. 2 Cor. XII, 3], cum in illam rapitur et subvenitur visionem."

vision St. Paul had and in which he saw, as we may well believe, the life in which we are to live forever.[13]

St. Augustine firmly and consistently taught that both Moses and St. Paul, the two great parallel figures of the old and new dispensations, had both had a unique experience of God in seeing him as he is.[14] Whether or not St. Augustine had such a vision is open to question, and neither he nor St. Thomas, who accepts his authority in this matter, explicitly limits the experience to Paul and Moses.[15]

A passage from St. Augustine's De quantitate animae on the highest level of ascent of the soul to the divine describes what could easily be read as a direct intuition of the divine essence, and alludes to a number of people who have had, and are still having, such an experience. The seventh and last level of the soul is the very vision and contemplation of Truth, a vision which brings an inexpressible joy and peace to the beholder. Great and incomparable souls who have actually seen and are seeing such things have disclosed this experience to the extent that they thought fitting. If we adhere to the course which God enjoins

[13] De genesi ad litteram, XII, c.28, n.56; P.L. 34, col. 478; cited in Enchiridion asceticum, n. 656: Visio Pauli: tertium caelum. Quapropter, si hoc tertium visionis genus, quod superius est, non solum omni corporali, quo per corporis sensus corpora sentiuntur, verum etiam omni illo spiritali, quo similitudines corporum spiritu, non mente cernuntur, tertium caelum appellavit apostolus; in hoc videtur claritas Dei, cui videndae corda mundantur. Unde dictum est: *Beati mundicordes, quia ipsi Deum videbunt* [Mt. V, 8]; non per aliquam corporaliter vel spiritaliter figuratam significantionem tamquam per speculum in aenigmate sed *facie ad faciem* (1 Cor. XIII, 12), quod de Moyse dictum est, *os ad os* (Nm. XII, 8); per speciem scilicet, qua Deus est quidquid est, quantulumcumque eum mens, quae non est quod ipse, etiam ab omni terrena labe mundata et ab omni corpore et similitudine corporis alienata et abrepta capere potest; a quo peregrinamur mortali et corruptibili onere gravati, quamdiu per fidem ambulamus, non per speciem [cf. 2 Cor. V, 6 ff.], et cum hic juste vivimus. Cur autem non credamus, quod tanto apostolo gentium doctori, rapto usque ad istam excellentissimam visionem, voluerit Deus demonstrare vitam, in qua post hanc vivendum est in aeternum?

[14] A few authorities maintain that St. Augustine had a change of mind on this question, but Dom Butler's review of the problem (Western mysticism, pp. 84 ff.) shows that they have misread certain other passages in St. Augustine.

[15] Butler, op. cit., pp. 86, 84–85 and the whole treatment of St. Augustine's conception of the vision of God, pp. 78–88. Butler points out that there is no question that St. Augustine's account of the visions of Paul and Moses run against the mainstream of theological and mystical speculation: "St. Thomas's acceptance is due, it may safely be said, to his reverence for St. Augustine . . . and has been a source of embarrassment to St. Thomas's commentators." (p. 84, n. 1)

upon us, we shall by his power and wisdom come to the supreme Author of all things.[16]

Who were these great incomparable souls? Which men have seen and are still seeing the divine? Almost certainly St. Augustine means St. Paul and even, perhaps, Plotinus and Porphyry.[17] It is true that this work represents an earlier phase of St. Augustine's thought, but it is not anything he ever retracted, and in the absence of specific data to the contrary, we may assume that St. Augustine did not exclude the bare possibility of others sharing the experience of St. Paul and Moses.

The debate on this question continued, and in the twelfth century we find St. Bernard absolutely certain that no man in this life, neither a man of wisdom, nor a saint, nor a prophet can have that direct vision of God which is the prerogative of the blessed, while still in this mortal flesh.[18] What is more, he specifically excludes Moses from such a vision, saying that Moses saw much less than he desired.[19] Still, St. Bernard did grant to St. Paul the highest mode of vision humanly possible. The lower forms of what St. Bernard calls "consideration" involve the use of the senses and things, either in the active or intellectual life. The highest form departs from the use of things and of the senses and,

[16] De quantitate animae, XXXIII, 76; P.L. 32, col. 1076: "Iam vero in ipsa visione atque contemplatione veritatis, quae septimus atque ultimus animae gradus est (neque iam gradus, sed quaedam mansio, quo illis gradibus pervenitur), quae sint gaudia, quae perfruitio summi et veri boni, cuius serenitatis atque aeternitatis afflatus, quid ego dicam? Dixerunt haec quantum dicenda esse iudicaverunt, magnae quaedam et incomparabiles animae, quas etiam vidisse ac videre ista credimus. Illud plane ego nunc audeo tibi dicere, no si cursum quem nobis Deus imperat, et quem tenendum suscepimus, constantissime tenuerimus, perventuros per Virtutem Dei atque Sapientiam ad summam illam Causam, vel summum Auctorem, vel summum Principium rerum omnium, vel si quo alio modo res tanta congruentius appellari potest." Paget Toynbee also cites this passage to elucidate Dante's allusion to this work in the letter to Can Grande: Dantis Alagherii epistolae, The letters of Dante, ed. Paget Toynbee, Oxford, 1920, p. 193.

[17] Cf. Butler, op.cit., pp. 59–60, 65 and St. Augustine, The greatness of the soul (Ancient Christian Writers, vol. IX), trans. by Joseph M. Colleran, London, 1949, p. 214, n. 101.

[18] St. Bernard, Sermones in canticum canticorum, sermo XXXI, 2; P.L. 183, col. 941: "At talis visio non est vitae praesentis, sed in novissimis reservatur. . . Non sapiens, non sanctus, non propheta videre illum, sicuti est, potest, aut potuit in corpore hoc mortali. . ."

[19] Ibid., sermo XXXIV, 1; P.L. 183, cols. 959–960. See Étienne Gilson, La théologie mystique de Saint Bernard, Paris, 1947, pp. 113 ff. for other references to St. Bernard's statements on this question.

as much as is humanly possible, not by a graded ascent but by unexpected raptures, conducts us to the heights. Such was the rapture of Paul and it was, as he tells us himself, a rapture and not an ascent, for he was caught up.[20]

The lower forms of consideration are nothing more than what we have called "speculation," clearly seeing the invisible things of God through the things that are made. The blessed, citizens of the true homeland, clearly have no need of such a ladder. The exiles, however, do have such a need. The higher form of consideration transcends creatures, sees more deeply into the things of heaven than is possible through the use of creatures. It sees the Word and the things made through the Word in the Word itself. It thus does not descend to things to get a knowledge of them, but sees them far better than in themselves. Consideration (of the highest kind) does not need the medium of the senses. It perceives immediately and is the best sort of vision. It satisfies the longing of the heart, and the person who has this capacity is content in himself.[21] There is thus, for St. Bernard, a form of

[20] De consideratione V, 2, 3; P.L. 182, 749C: "At omnium maximus, qui spreto usu rerum et sensuum, quantum quidem humanae fragilitati fas est, non ascensoriis gradibus, sed inopinatis excessibus avolare interdum contemplando ad illa sublimia consuevit. Ad hoc ultimum genus illos pertinere reor excessus Pauli. Excessus, non ascensus: nam raptum potius fuisse, quam ascendisse ipse se perhibet." See George Bosworth Burch, The Steps of Humility by Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, Cambridge, Mass., 1950, pp. 28–29 of Burch's long introduction on St. Bernard's epistemology. Consideration and contemplation were often used interchangeably, although St. Bernard carefully distinguished the two. *Contemplatio* is certain, and is the soul's unerring intuition or apprehension of truth. *Consideratio* is thought in the process of seeking earnestly, the mind searching for truth. However, St. Bernard admits, the two terms are used indifferently for one another in practice. See De consideratione II, 2, 5; P.L. 182, col. 745.

[21] De consideratione V, 1, 1; P.L. 182, cols. 787–789: "Et hoc velum solerter advertas, vir sagacissime Eugeni, quia toties peregrinatur consideratio tua, quoties ab illis rebus ad ista deflectitur inferiora et visibilia, sive intuenda ad notitiam, sive appetenda ad usum, sive pro officio disponenda vel actitanda. Si tamen, ita versatur in his, ut per haec illa requirat, haud procul exsulat. Sic considerare, repatriare est. Sublimior iste praesentium ac dignior usus rerum, cum juxta sapientiam Pauli, *invisibilia Dei, per eaquae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur*. Sane hac scala civis non egent, sed exsules. Quod vidit ipse hujus sententiae auctor, qui cum diceret invisibilia per visibilia conspici, signanter posuit, *a creatura mundi* (Rom. I, 20). Et vero quid opus scalis tenenti jam solium? Creatura coeli illa est, praesto habens per quod potius ista intueatur. Videt Verbum, et in Verbo facta per Verbum. Nec opus habet ex his quae facta sunt, Factoris notitiam mendicare. Neque enim ut vel ipsa noverit, ad ipsa descendit, quae ibi illa videt, ubi longe melius sunt quam in se ipsis. Unde nec medium requirit ad ea corporis sensum: sensus ipsa sibi, se ipsa sentiens. Optimum vivendi genus, si nullus egeris, ad omne quod libuerit, te contentus.

rapture which leads to a most exalted and immediate knowledge of heavenly things, even the Word itself, but this is not — and this must be stressed — vision of God *per speciem*, however much St. Bernard may use the vocabulary of vision. On this matter, he is abundantly clear, as we have seen, even though some of his statements taken in isolation might seem to be capable of such an interpretation. We are often mislead by the vocabulary of vision into thinking that "seeing," in mystical usage, necessarily means seeing *facie ad faciem*. But this is not so, and the great mystics were quite exact on this point.

This distinction will perhaps be made clearer if we turn to the writings of Richard of St. Victor, a famous contemporary of St. Bernard. Richard distinguished six kinds of contemplation: contemplation through the imagination alone, through the imagination but according to reason, "in the reason" but according to the imagination, "in the reason" but according to reason, above but not contrary to reason, and a last form of contemplation which is above reason and would seem to be beyond it.[22]

The sixth kind of contemplation meditates those things which are above reason and which seem to be beyond and even against reason. The soul exults and dances for joy when it has attained this supreme, most worthy, and lofty form of all the kinds of contemplation. Then it knows and contemplates by divine illumination all those things that human reason cries out against. Such things are virtually all the doctrines we are constrained to believe concerning the Trinity, which when considered in the light of human reason are no other than contradictory to it.[23] This is

[22] De gratia contemplationis libri quinque, Benjamin maior, I, 6; P.L. 196, col. 70B–C: "Sex autem sunt contemplationum genera a se et inter se omnino divisa. Primum itaque est in imaginatione et secundum solam imaginationem. Secundum est in imaginatione secundum rationem. Tertium est in ratione secundum imaginationem. Quartum est in ratione et secundum rationem. Quintum est supra, sed non praeter rationem. Sextum supra rationem, et videtur esse praeter rationem. Duo itaque sunt in imaginatione, duo in ratione, duo in intelligentia."

[23] Ibid., col. 72B–C: "Sextum contemplationis genus dictum est, quod in his versatur quae sunt supra rationem, et videntur esse praeter, seu etiam contra rationem. In hac utique suprema omniumque dignissima contemplationum specula tunc animus veraciter exsultat atque tripudiat, quando illa ex divini luminis irradiatione cognoscit atque considerat quibus omnis humana ratio reclamat. Talia sunt paene omnia quae de personarum Trinitate credere jubemur. De quibus cum humana ratio consulitur, nihil aliud quam contrario videtur." Cf. ibid. IV, 18; 458D–459A on mysteries of Trinity revealed in this form of contemplation.

the form of contemplation which was experienced by St. Paul when he was rapt to the third heaven. It was a complete transcending of reason itself and arrives at the most contradictory of the articles of faith. St. Paul's rapture was the third and highest kind. The lowest merely rises above the corporeal senses while the next highest rises above the faculty of the imagination, a faculty which is a mean between the sensory and the rational.[24]

Yet, as we discover when we turn to Richard's Mystical Annotations on the Psalms, this highest form of contemplation we have just considered is not a vision of God in His essence. There are various modes of seeing God. We see him by faith when we firmly believe what is written in scripture concerning him. We see him through contemplation when the truths of faith are imprinted on the eyes of our intelligence by divine inspiration, and we see him in His essence when he is seen as He is, in His own substance, face to face. Only the soul which has been assimilated to the divine nature can see Him this way. Such an assimilation to the divine nature means an utter transcendence of the corporeal state, such as obtains in heaven, where God is eternally present and enjoyed, and in the vision of whom there is rejoicing. God is said to dwell in a soul in this state.[25]

[24] Benjamin major V, 19; P.L. 196, 192A–B: "Dictum est quibus de causis mentis alienatio accidere soleat, nunc illud adjiciendum videtur quibus etiam gradibus ascendat. Ascendit autem aliquando supra sensum corporalem, aliquando etiam supra imaginationem, aliquando vero supra rationem. Quis autem illam quae supra sensum corporeum, seu illam quae supra imaginationem est negare audeat, cum illam etiam quae supra rationem est, apostolica illa auctoritas convincat? *Scio*, inquit, *hominem sive in corpore, sive extra corpus, Deus scit, raptum ejusmodi usque ad tertium coelum* (2 Cor. XII)."

[25] Adnotationes mysticae in psalmos, Adnotatio in psalmum II, P.L. 196, col. 271A–D: Per fidem eum videmus, quando illa quae de eo scripta sunt firmiter credimus. Per contemplationem autem eum cernit, qui in eo quod de illo prius credidit, ex inspiratione divina intelligentiae oculos figit. Per speciem vero videtur, quando in propria substantia sicuti est facie ad faciem cernitur.

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Sola anima quae ad similitudinem ejus facta est, divinae naturae substantiam videre potest.

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Quoniam igitur sola anima divinae claritatis capax est, ad quod sensus corporeus nunquam penetrare potest, merito in coelo, hoc est in anima, Deus habitare asseritur, quae ejus in aeternum et praesentia fruitur, et visione laetatur. Although Richard does not take up the question of seeing God in his essence in this life in Benjamin major, he seems to deny the possibility there when, symbolizing God as the sun

St. Thomas also takes up the question whether anyone in this life can see God *per essentiam*. It is generally speaking impossible, although he allows that it happened in the case of Paul and Moses on the authority of St. Augustine. These occurences, however, were out of the ordinary although it has happened that the minds of some living in this flesh, but not employing the senses of the flesh, were raised to a vision of the divine essence, as St. Augustine says of both Moses and Paul. St. Thomas uses the phrase *mentes aliquorum* which would seem to imply that he did not necessarily and explicitly confine the experience to the two great parallel figures, although one feels that he would have liked to. As we shall see, every time he treats the question he decides against the possibility of seeing the divine essence in this life but always makes an exception for the *Doctor Judaeorum* and the *Doctor Gentium*.[26]

The contemplative life itself, the highest form of human activity, does not lead to a vision of the divine essence, unless as in the case of St. Paul the soul is freed from the necessity of using the organs of sense. His was, therefore, the supreme degree of contemplation possible in the present life and is a kind of mean between the eternal beatific vision after death and the kind of contemplative vision normally possible in this life.[27]

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of heaven, he says that no one can see the high noon of that heavenly day while in this corruptible flesh, although he does not dare deny that some have seen its early morning. Benjamin major, III, 10; P.L. 196, col. 120B: Neminem tamen credo ad hujus diei meridiem in hac duntaxat carne corruptibili posse pertingere, quamvis negare non audeam de mane.

[26] Citations from and reference to St. Thomas' works other than the Summae are to the Vivès edition, ed. P. Fretté and P. Maré, 34 vols., Paris, 1871–1880, unless otherwise indicated. St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologiae 1, q.12 a.11: "(Utrum aliquis in hac vita possit videre Deum per essentiam). Ad secundum dicendum quod, sicut Deus miraculose aliquid supernaturaliter in rebus corporeis operatur, ita etiam et supernaturaliter, et praeter communem ordinem, mentes aliquorum in hac carne viventium, sed non sensibus carnis utentium, usque ad visionem suae essentiae elevavit; ut dicit Augustinus, XII *Super Gen. ad litt.*, et in libro *De videndo Deum*, de Moyse, qui fuit magister Gentium." The references to St. Augustine are to the following: De Gen ad litt., XII, c.26, col. 476; c.27 col. 477; c.28 col. 478; c.34 col. 482 in P.L. 34; De videndo Deum in Epist. 147 c.13; P.L. 34 col. 610. St. Thomas discusses this question in several other works, some of which I will discuss below: Sent. III, d.27 q.3 a.1; d.35 a.2 a.2 qa.2; IV d.49 q.2 a.7; De veritate, q.10 a.11; In II Corinth. c.12 lect.1; Quodl. I q.1.

[27] Summa theologiae, 2–2 q.180 a.5 resp. "(Utrum vita contemplativa, secundum

If contemplation never, or very infrequently and only by a special grace, attains to the divine substance, neither does prophecy. The prophetic vision is not a vision of the divine essence, nor do prophets see whatever they see in that essence. Their vision is through similitudes according to the degree of divine illumination that they receive. This kind of prophetic illumination may therefore be called a mirror, in that a mind so illumined contains a similitude of the truth of divine foreknowledge.[28] There are, however, grades of prophecy as there are grades of contemplation: that in which supernatural truth is received through imaginative visions, the middle grade between that supernatural truth received without images and the lowest form, also without images, but which receives truths of the human order intended to guide human relationships.[29] It was because Moses had seen God in His essence with the purest kind of intellectual vision that he is the greatest prophet of them all.[30]

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statum huius vitae, possit pertingere ad visionem divinae essentiae.) inquantum scilicet anima eius est corpori mortali coniuncta ut forma, ita tamen quod non utatur corporis sensibus, aut etiam imaginatione, sicut accidit in raptu. Et sic potest contemplatio huius vitae pertingere ad visionem divinae essentiae. Unde supremus gradus contemplationis paraesentis vitae est qualem habuit Paulus in raptu (2 Cor. XII, 2), secundum quem fuit medio modo se habens inter statum prasentis et futurae." Cf. Summa contra gentiles, Liber III, c. 47: "(Quod non possumus in hac vita videre Deum per essentiam.) Ultimus autem terminus quo contemplatio pertingere potest, est divina substantia. Unde oportet mentem quae divinam substantiam videt, totaliter a corporalibus sensibus esse absolutam, vel per mortem vel per aliquem raptum. Hinc est quod dicitur ex persona Dei, Exodi XXXIII, 20: *Non videbit me homo et vivet.*

[28] Summa theologiae, 2–2 q.173 a.1 resp.: "(Utrum prophetae ipsam Dei essentiam videant.) Et ideo dicendum est quod visio prophetica non est visio divinae essentiae: nec in ipsa divina essentia vident ea quae vident, sed in quibusdam similitudinibus, secundum illustrationem divini luminis. . . Sed huiusmodi illustratio mentis prophetice potest dici speculum, inquantum resultat ibi similitudo veritatis divinae praescientiae."

[29] Summa theologiae, 2–2 q.174 a.3 resp.: "(Utrum gradus prophetiae possint distingui secundum visionem imaginariam.) . . . prophetia in qua per lumen intelligibile revelatur aliqua supernaturalis veritas per imaginariam visionem, medium gradum tenet inter illam prophetiam in qua revelatur supernaturalis veritas absque imaginaria visione, et illam in qua per lumen intelligibile absque imaginaria visione dirigitur homo ad ea cognoscenda vel agenda quae pertinent ad humanam conversationem."

[30] Summa theologiae, 2–2 q.174 a.4 resp.: "(Utrum Moyses fuerit excellentior omnibus prophetis). Moyses ergo fuit aliis excellentior, primo quidem, quantum ad visionem intellectualem: eo quod vidit ipsam Dei essentiam, sicut Paulus in raptu; sicut Augustinus dicit, XII *Super Gen. ad litt.*"

St. Paul, too, had seen the divine essence while still in this life and his rapture was thus of the third and highest kind. The lowest form of rapture up to the contemplation of divine truth occurs through similitudes and through the imaginative faculty. Such, for example, was the rapture of St. Peter. The second form is the contemplation of divine truth through intelligible effects. Such was the experience of David. The third and highest kind, the kind experienced by St. Paul, was to see the divine essence. This is achieved through the "light of glory" and is permanently the prerogative of the blessed. It may also be experienced transitorily through a rapture; and such was the mode in which St. Paul experienced it while still in this life. The transitoriness of the experience makes the highest kind of rapture analogous to prophecy.[31]

The rapture of Paul took him beyond the outermost spheres to the empyrean or, if one agrees with John Damascene who does not believe in the existence of an empyrean, beyond the eighth sphere. There he saw those things which are entirely above corporeal nature. There he had a pure vision of intelligible things. This was the "third heaven" which he reached through a total alienation from the corporeal senses and from corporeal things. There he saw the intelligible universe as the angels and the blessed see it, and even more, he saw God in his essence. Thus, to go to the third heaven is to transcend the world of space and time, to enter the empyrean and to have the beatific vision. It follows that

[31] Summa theologiae, 2–2 q.175 a.3 ad 1 & 2: "(Utrum Paulus in raptu vident Dei essentiam). Ad primum ergo dicendum quod mens humana divinitus rapitur ad contemplandam veritatem divinam, tripliciter. Uno modo, ut contempletur eam per similitudines quasdam imaginarias. Et talis fuit excessu mentis qui cecidit supra Petrum. Alio modo, ut contempletur veritatem divinam per intelligibiles effectus: sicut fuit excessus David dicentis: *Ego dixi in excessu meo: Omnis homo mendax* (Ps. 115.2). Tertio, ut contempletur eam in sua essentia. Et talis fuit raptus Pauli: et etiam Moysi. Et satis congruenter: nam sicut Moyses fuit primus *Doctor Iudaeorum*, ita Paulis fuit primus *Doctor Gentium* (I Tim. 2.7).

Ad secundum dicendum quod divina essentia videri ab intellectu creato non potest nisi per lumen gloriae, de quo dicitur in Ps. 35.10: *In lumine tuo videbimus lumen*. Quod tamen dupliciter participari potest. Uno modo, per modum formae immanentis: et sic beatos facit sanctos in patria. Alio modo, per modum cuiusdam passionis transeuntis: sicut dictum est de lumine prophetiae. Et hoc modo lumen illud fuit in Paulo, quando raptus fuit. Et ideo ex tali visione non fuit simpliciter beatus, ut fieret redundantis ad corpus: sed solum secundum quid. Et ideo talis raptus aliquo modo ad prophetiam pertinet."

anyone who goes beyond the last material confines of the universe in a rapture will have the beatific vision.[32]

Rapture is both an intellectual and affective experience. From the point of view of the truth which is the goal of rapture it is, of course, intellectual. However, the efficient cause of the experience may also be affective, the experience may begin from the desire for it. But since the person experiencing the rapture delights in his vision, even the intellectual goal has an affective aspect, involves both love and understanding. It was in order to point out this twofold aspect of the beatific vision that St. Paul described his rapture as both an ascent to the third heaven, which pertains to intellectual contemplation, and an ascent to paradise, which pertains to affect.[33] Rapture too is to be distinguished from ecstasy, for the former implies a certain violence in the departure from the self.[34]

Exactly what the status of contemplation and rapture is in the framework of St. Thomas' thought will be clearer if we examine his analysis of all the modes of knowing God. In question eighteen of De veritate, St. Thomas takes up the question of the knowledge of the first man in the state of innocence, and the first article is concerned with whether Adam in that state knew God through his essence. After considering the various aspects of the question St. Thomas decides that he did not, for he was still on the

[32] St. Thomas Aquinas, In epistolam II ad Corinthios, c. XII, lectio 1; pp. 153–154 in Vivès edition, vol. XII:
Et hoc modo dicitur quod Apostolus erat raptus usque ad tertium coelum, id est usque ad videndum ea quae sunt in coelo empyreo, non ut existeret ibi, quia sic scire si fuisset sive in corpore, sive extra corpus. Vel secundum Damascenum, qui non ponit coelum empyreum, possumus dicere quod tertium coelum ad quod raptus est Apostolus, est supra octavam sphaerum, ut scilicet evidenter videret ea quae sunt supra totam naturam corporalem. . . . Paulus vero dicitur raptus ad tertium coelum, quia fuit alienatus a sensibus, et sublimatus ab omnibus corporalibus, ut videret intelligibilia nuda et pura eo modo quo vident angeli et anima separata, et quod plus est, etiam ipsum Deum per essentiam, ut Augustinus expresse dicit, XII *Super Gen. ad litteram*, et ad Paulinum, in lib. *De videndo Deum*.

[33] Summa theologiae, 2–2, q.175 a.2 resp.: "(Utrum raptus magis pertineat ad vim appetitivum quam ad vim cognoscitivum.) Habet etiam effectum in appetitiva virtute: cum scilicet aliquis delectatur in his ad quae rapitur. Unde et Apostolus dixit II Cor. XII, 2 se reptum, non solum *ad tertium caelum*, quod pertinet ad contemplationem intellectus: sed etiam *in Paradisum*, quod pertinet ad affectum."

[34] Summa theologiae, 2–2 q.175 a.2 ad 1: "raptus addit aliquid supra extasim nam extasis importat simpliciter excessum a seipso . . . sed raptus supra hoc addit violentiam quandam."

way to beatitude and had not achieved it.[35] Thomas explains that there are three modes of knowing God. After the fall we have need of a kind of mirror, in which there arises a likeness of God himself. For we can only arrive at the invisible things of him by the things that are made, according to Romans (I, 20).[36] While man was still in a state of innocence, he did not need this sort of medium. He did, however, need a medium which is somewhat like the visible species of a thing, since he then saw God through a spiritual light which flowed from God into his mind and which was a kind of expressed likeness of the uncreated light.[37] In heaven, man will need neither a *speculum* or a *species* for seeing God, but the means of seeing him will be God's own essence. He will need no intelligible or sensible likeness of the Deity, for no such likeness can disclose God's essence. He will, however, need the light of glory which will be a kind of medium by which God is seen, according to the Psalms (XXXV, 10): "In thy light we shall see light." The reason why this light of glory is needed is that this kind of truly supernatural sight is not natural to any creature, only to God, so that no creature can reach it by his own natural power but must be enlightened by a light from the divine.[38]

Contemplation is also a vision of God, but where he is seen through the medium of the light of wisdom. However, while contemplation raises the mind to divine things, it does not rise to the immediate vision of the divine essence. In fact, it is not even

[35] De veritate, q.XVIII, a.1 resp.; vol. XV, p. 82 Vivès ed.: "Et ideo, cum Adam fuerit adhuc in via ad beatitudinem, Deum per essentiam non vidit."

[36] Ibid., ad 1; pp. 82–83: "Homo igitur in statu post peccatum indiget ad cognoscendum Deum medio, quod est quasi speculum, in quo resultat ipsius Dei similitudo; oportet enim ut per ea quae facta sunt, in invisibilia ejus veniamus, ut dicitur Rom. I."

[37] Ibid., p. 83: "Hoc autem medio non indigebat homo in statu innocentiae; indigebat autem medio quod est quasi species rei visae; quia per aliquod spirituale lumen menti hominis influxam divinitus, quod erat quasi similitudo expressa lucis increatae, Deum videbat.

[38] Ibid., p. 83: "Sed hoc medio non indigebit in patria; quia ipsam Dei essentiam per se ipsam videbit, non per aliquam ejus similitudinem vel intelligibilem vel sensibilem, cum nulla creata similitudo adeo possit perfecte Deum repraesentare, ut per eam videns ipsam Dei essentiam cognoscere aliquis possit. Indigebit autem lumine gloriae in patria, quod erit quasi medium sub quo videtur, secundum illud Psalm. XXXV, 10: *In lumine tuo videbimus lumen*, eo quod ista visio nulli creaturae est naturalis, sed soli Deo; unde nulla creatura in eam ex sua natura potest pertingere; sed ad eam consequendam oportet quod illustretur lumine divinitus emissio."

as perfect a vision as Adam was capable of in the state of innocence.[39] This evaluation of contemplation is especially interesting in view of the fact that Dante's depiction of the "moment" of contemplation in the journey of the mind to God occurs, in the Paradiso, *after* he has been reconstituted in his unfallen human nature. The visions he receives after he has returned to the state of innocence in the garden of Eden are prophetic in character, and would seem to correspond to that mode of prophecy effected through imaginative similitudes, a mode, as we have seen, that St. Thomas places below purely intellectual prophetic vision.

St. Thomas also makes some further elaborations of these modes of vision, in discussing the rapture of St. Paul and whether he saw God in his essence. It would seem that he did not, for knowledge in this life of God is through a mirror or obscure but significative images (*aenigma*) of sensible creatures. The knowing of heaven, by which we see God in his essence, is natural only to God. Yet if this is so, it would go against the express authority of St. Augustine, for he says that in his rapture St. Paul did see God in his essence. But it is fitting that St. Paul should have had this vision, for it is not likely that such a vision should have been granted to Moses, the doctor of the Jews and not to St. Paul, the doctor of the gentiles.[40] Here, on the authority of St. Augustine, St. Thomas assumes the authenticity of Moses' vision and argues for St. Paul's on the basis of the parallelisms of Old and New Testaments and the special revelations given to Jews and gentiles. Although St. Thomas usually defines vision *per speculum* as above, in at least one instance he seems to identify it with vision *per fidem*, with any indirect knowledge of God whether through

[39] Ibid., ad 4 p. 83: "Ad quartum dicendum quod in contemplatione Deus videtur per medium, quod est lumen sapientiae, mentem elevans ad cernenda divina; non autem ut ipsa divina essenti immediate videatur; et sic per gratiam videtur a contemplante post statum peccati, quamvis perfectius in statu innocentiae."

[40] De veritate, q.XIII a.2 resp. vol. XIV, pp. 683–684, Vivès: Cognitio vero viae, quae est per speculum et aenigma sensibilium creaturarum, est homini naturalis; sed cognitio patriae, qua Deus per suam essentiam videtur, est soli Deo naturalis. Sed haec positio repugnat dictis Augustini, qui expresse dicit in supradictis locis, quod Paulus in raptu vidit Deum per essentiam. Nec est probabile ut minister veteris testamenti ad Judaeos Deum per essentiam viderit, ut habetur ex hoc quod dicitur Num. XII, 8: *Palam, et non per aenigmata, videt Deum*; et ministro novi testamenti Doctori Gentium, hoc concessum non fuerit. Cf. also on St. Paul's rapture St. Thomas Aquinas, Sent. IV d.49 q.2 a.7 ad 5.

creatures or through faith.[41] However, he usually reserves knowledge of God *per speculum* for the kind of knowledge gained through creation and which even a pagan could have.

Let us now turn to Dante, examine his allusions to St. Paul, and try to ascertain how he is related to this tradition of controversy over the nature of St. Paul's rapture and the kinds of knowledge of God subsequent theologians derived from the Pauline texts we have considered. I will begin with the well-known passage from the letter to Can Grande della Scala where he explains his allusion to St. Paul in canto I of the Paradiso, and also refers to various famous contemplatives in support of his claim of having had some kind of supernatural vision:

And after he has said that he was in that place of Paradise which he describes by circumlocution, he goes on to say that he saw certain things which he who descends therefrom is powerless to relate. And he gives the reason, saying that 'the intellect plunges itself to such depth' in its very longing, which is for God, 'that the memory cannot follow.' For the understanding of which it must be noted that the human intellect in this life, by reason of its connaturality and affinity to the separate intellectual substance, when in exaltation, reaches such a height of exaltation that after its return to itself memory fails, since it has transcended the range of human faculty. And this is conveyed to us by the Apostle where he says, addressing the Corinthians: 'I know a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth) how that he was caught up to the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.' Behold, after the intellect had passed behind beyond the bounds of human faculty in its exaltation, it could not recall what took place outside of its range. This again is conveyed to us in Matthew, where we read that the three disciples fell on their faces, and record nothing thereafter, as though memory had failed them. And in Ezekiel it is written: 'And when I saw it, I fell upon my face.' And should these not satisfy the cavillers, let them read Richard of St. Victor in his book *On Contemplation*; let them read Bernard in his book *On Consideration*; let them read Augustine in his book *On the Capacity of the Soul*; and they will cease from their cavilling. But if on account of the sinfulness of

[41] De veritate, q.XIII, a.3 11.; Vol. XV p. 2 Vivès: Praeterea, Paulus dum vidit Deum per essentiam, adhuc fidem habebat. Sed fidei est videre per speculum in aenigmate. Sed aenigmatica cognitio est specularis, et est per sensibilia.

the speaker they should cry out against his claim to have reached such a height of exaltation, let them read Daniel, where they will find that even Nebuchadnezzar by divine permission beheld certain things as a warning to sinners, and straightway forgot them. For He 'who maketh his sun to shine on the good and on the evil, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust,' sometimes in compassion for their conversion, sometimes in wrath for their chastisement, in greater or lesser measure, according as He wills, manifests his glory to evil-doers, be they never so evil.[42]

What strikes us most of all in this passage is Dante's identification of himself with St. Paul. As we have seen, whether or not St. Paul saw God in his essence, the fathers and doctors agreed that he achieved the highest form of supernatural vision possible in this life. He and Moses are the classic instances around which Christian mysticism focuses the discussion of its central problem of what exactly happens in the experience of contemplatives. Thus Dante's analogy between St. Paul and himself is intensely

[42] Dantis Alagherii epistolae, The letters of Dante, ed. and trans. by Paget Toynbee, Oxford, 1920. I cite Toynbee's text and translation. Ep. X, 28, 525 ff.: "Et postquam dixit quod fuit in loco illo Paradisi per suam circumlocutionem, prosequitur dicens se vidisse aliqua quae recitare non potest qui descendit. Et reddit causam, dicens quod 'quod intellectus in tantum profundat se' in ipsum desiderium suum, quod est Deus, 'quod memoria sequi non potest.' Ad quae intelligenta sciendum est, quod intellectus humanus in hac vita, propter connaturalitatem et affinitatem quam habet ad substantiam intellectualem separatam, quando elevatur, in tantum elevatur ut memoria post reditum deficiat, propter transcendisse humanum modum. Et hoc insinuatur nobis per Apostolum ad Corinthios loquentem, ubi dicit: 'Scio hominem (sive in corpore, sive extra corpus, nescio, Deus scit), raptum usque ad tertium coelum, et audivit arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui.' Ecce, postquam humanam rationem intellectus ascensione transierat, quae extra se agerentur non recordabatur. Hoc etiam est insinuatum nobis in Matthaeo, ubi tres discipuli ceciderunt in faciem suam, nihil postea recitantes, quasi obliti. Et in Ezechiele scribitur: 'Vidi et cecidi in faciem meam.' Et ubi ista invidis non sufficiant, legant Richardum de sancto Victore in libro *De Contemplatione*; legant Bernardum in libro *De Consideratione*; legant Augustinum in libro *De Quantitate Animae*, et non invidebunt. Si vero in dispositionem elevationis tantae propter peccatum loquentis oblatrarent, legant Danielem, ubi et Nabuchodonosor invenient contra peccatores aliqua vidisse divinitus, oblivionique mandasse. Nam "Qui oriri solem suum facit super bonos et males, et pluit super iustos et iniustos," aliquando misericorditer ad conversionem, aliquando severe ad punitionem, plus et minus, ut vult, gloriam suam quantumcumque male viventibus manifestat." The biblical references in this section of the letter to Can Grande are in their order as follows: 2 Cor. XII, 2–4 which Dante quotes in a truncated version; Matt. XVII, 1–8; Ezek. I, 28 (Vulg. II, 1.); Dan. II, 3–5; Matt. V, 45.

charged, and any theologically sophisticated reader of his time would have grasped the immensity of Dante's claim. Dante himself realizes it, for he immediately follows it up with a short list of mystical literature, the reading of which would stop all the cavillers and, by allusion to Nebuchadnezzar's brief illumination, enforces the point that you do not have to deserve such a vision to have it.

The question for us here is whether Dante was one of those who believed that St. Paul had seen God in his essence. If he did, then his claim is even more astounding, for the only two *certain* instances of such a vision in the theological literature were Moses and St. Paul. In the light of this question, the allusions he makes to Richard of St. Victor, St. Bernard and St. Augustine are difficult to interpret. St. Paul is mentioned, as we have seen, in both De contemplatione, as Dante calls the Benjamin Major, and in De consideratione, as an example of one who experienced the highest form of mystical experience. In neither work is the question discussed of whether he or any mortal can see God in his essence while still in this life, although both St. Bernard and Richard elsewhere decide against this possibility. Neither of them implies that St. Paul's rapture was unique or virtually so. We must, however, bear in mind that in neither work is the possibility of such an interpretation excluded on the part of the reader, even if the authors would have rejected it. The vocabulary of mysticism is so involved with the terminology of spiritual vision, there is so much talk of seeing and understanding superrational truths such as the Trinity and Incarnation, that the texts could seem to be describing a vision of God's essence. However, as we have learned from our discussion of Richard of St. Victor, even seeing and understanding such mysteries does not mean seeing God "face to face."

St. Augustine in De quantitate animae does not mention St. Paul by name, but there is clearly a reference to him, along with a few unspecified others, as having seen the eternal truth. St. Augustine frequently used the vocabulary of vision in regard to the highest intellectual and intelligible things so that this work too could be read as saying that contemplatives see God's essence,

something he was certainly willing to allow elsewhere to St. Paul and Moses if not to others.[43]

When we encounter these great contemplatives again in the Paradiso, what does Dante say of them? Richard appears in the heaven of the sun as one who in consideration was more than a man (Par. X, 131–32: "Riccardo / Che a considerar fu più che viro."); St. Augustine sits in the celestial rose of the empyrean (Par. XXXII, 35); and St. Bernard, Dante's final guide, is simply described as one who in our world tasted through contemplation of the peace of heaven (Par. XXXI, 110–11: "colui che 'n questo mondo, contemplando, gustò di quella pace"). I think it is significant that Dante does not say of St. Bernard that he saw heaven in this life, but simply that he had a taste of its peace, a way of describing a supernatural experience short of vision. As we shall see later, the only person Dante explicitly points out as having seen heaven is St. Paul.

In any case, the very least that Dante claims in the letter to Can Grande is an experience like St. Paul's, although we cannot determine from his claim in this instance how he conceives that experience. An examination of the reference to St. Paul in the Divine Comedy will, I believe, elucidate his view of St. Paul's rapture and will throw light on one of the principles of structure of the work which is, in part, an imaginative representation and synthesis of all the Pauline modes of knowledge of God.

The first, and perhaps the most significant mention of St. Paul occurs in the second Canto of the Inferno when Dante learns from Virgil about the great journey he is to undertake (Inf. II, 10ff.) through all the realms of the beyond. Dante is discouraged by what he feels is his weakness for the journey and awestruck at its magnitude. True, Aeneas, in the flesh, was granted a vision of the eternal world, but he had the universal mission of founding Rome and the Empire in preparation for the subsequent foundation of the Church. Analogously, St. Paul, the chosen vessel, went there to return with confirmation of the faith which is necessary for salvation. At this realization Dante feels so unworthy

[43] St. Augustine so frequently speaks of a *clear* vision of eternal truth that it would be very easy to take him as advocating the general possibility of a vision of God's essence, even if he is not doing so. See Butler, op.cit., pp. 49 ff., esp. 50–51.

that he exclaims: "But I, why should I go there, and who grants it? I am not Aeneas; I am not Paul. Neither I nor any man thinks me fit for this, so that if I commit myself to go I fear lest my going be folly." [44]

Aeneas and St. Paul were the two men who, in the flesh, were granted universal visions necessary for their great missions. Indeed, Dante draws these two great figures even closer together by telling us that Aeneas heard things in his supernatural journey which were the cause of his victory (Inf. II, 26–27: "intese cose che furon cagione / di sua vittoria"), a phrase which suggests the *arcana verba* that St. Paul heard in his rapture, words which cannot be disclosed but which fitted him also for his mission. Of course, Dante the pilgrim is telling us that he is about to have a universal vision, a third one to be added to the two of Aeneas and St. Paul. But what is just as striking, if not as obvious, is that the great parallel to St. Paul in the tradition of mystical thought was not Aeneas but Moses, and that Dante creates a new typology and parallelism of his own. The two consummate seers are not the *Doctor Judaeorum* and *Doctor gentium* but the *pater Romanorum* and the *Doctor gentium*.

It is only when we see this passage in the light of the whole tradition of scriptural typological parallelism and mystical speculation that its force and boldness are made clear. The parallel between Moses and St. Paul was no more extrinsic and coincidental than the one between Adam and Christ as the second Adam. This is the way providence governs history, each great figure in the drama of revelation being both a prophecy of what is to come and a pointing back to his archetype in what has been.

Dante very subtly takes up the Aeneas-Paul parallel again in Paradiso XV when he meets his ancestor Cacciaguida, a gem in the cross of souls in the heaven of Mars who leaves it to come to greet Dante. Cacciaguida reaches out "with such affection as

[44] Inf. II, 31–35. All translations and citations from the Divine Comedy are from J. D. Sinclair's edition and translation, The Divine Comedy, 3 vols., New York, 1948.

Ma io perchè venirvi? o chi 'l concede?
Io non Enea, io non Paolo sono:
ma degno a ciò nè io nè altri crede.
Per che, se del venire io m' abbandono,
temo che la venuta non sia folle:

Anchises showed to Aeneas when he recognized him in Elysium, if we may trust the account that Virgil, our greatest muse, gives." Cacciaguida then exclaims in Latin: "O my own blood! O grace of God poured forth above measure! To whom as to thee was heaven's gate ever opened twice?" [45]

The answer is obvious even though Dante does not give it. Such an experience was given to St. Paul. If Cacciaguida is, in Dante's private typology, an Anchises, then Dante is an Aeneas, but a celestial and christian Aeneas, for the pagan real Aeneas is in limbo (Inf. IV, 122). The truly archetypal christian Aeneas — again in Dante's private typology — is St. Paul. He is the christian parallel, and to him, if to anyone, were the gates of heaven open twice, rapt while in this life to the highest heaven. What Dante here seems to be saying is that St. Paul received a unique vision shared by no other — except Dante himself. We have seen that where, in the mystical literature, St. Paul is singled out as truly unique it is in virtue of having seen God in his essence. Otherwise he is simply *primus inter pares*, not *primus super pares*. He certainly, in Dante's view, saw more than either Gregory or Dionysius, two great masters of contemplation (Par. XXVIII, 130–139), but I think that the implication of this passage is that St. Paul's vision was singular in some qualitative sense and not simply in degree, and the only qualitative difference there was which distinguished him from other mystics was that he saw God *facie ad faciem*. My interpretation of this episode will become clearer if we examine other Pauline allusions in the Divine Comedy.

The beginning of the rapturous ascent through the spheres of the Paradiso occurs when Dante looks upon the eyes of Beatrice after he is reconstituted in his truly human nature as God intended it to be before the Fall. At her aspect he was changed within, as Glaucus was after eating the herb which made him a sea-god.

[45] Par. XV, 25:

sì pia l' ombra d' Anchise si porse,
se fede merta nostra maggior musa,
quando in Eliso del figlio s' accorse.
'O sanguis meus, o superinfusa
gratia Dei, sicut tibi cui
bis unquam coeli ianua reclusa?'

Dante now passes beyond the human condition at its most perfect, a condition greater than that which man enjoyed before the Fall (Par. I, 55 ff.). It is indescribable and the example itself is really only for those to whom grace reserves the experience. Dante himself does not know, paraphrasing St. Paul, whether he was rapt in the spirit alone, that part which God created last, or in the flesh.[46]

When Dante enters the sphere of the moon, he again refers to his inability to know if he was in the body or not for, if he was, there must be interpenetration of substances, a thing which we cannot conceive. But this puzzle should only kindle our desire to the essence of Him in Whom our nature was joined to God. For in the empyrean will be seen that which we hold by faith, not demonstrated but known *per se* like an axiomatic truth. In this episode we find not only a repetition of the reference to the famous text of St. Paul's in Second Corinthians XII, but to another text in the same letter where St. Paul draws the important distinction between walking by faith and by sight.[47]

That Pauline text, for later theologians, defined the difference between knowledge of God through faith and knowledge of his essence. This, as we have seen, is certainly the meaning St. Augustine gave to it, and Dante agrees with him, for he speaks in this

[46] Par. I, 70:

Transumanar significar per verba
non si poria; però l' essemplo basti
a cui esperienza grazia serba.
S' i' era sol di me quel che creasti
novellamente, amor che 'l ciel governi,
tu 'l sai, che col tuo lume mi levasti.

Note that Dante has transcended the state of vision possible to unfallen man. Aquinas says that contemplation is only a partial restoration of that vision. Clearly Dante is claiming a higher vision than the one St. Thomas calls contemplation. In the Thomistic scheme, he could only be claiming to see God in His essence since that is the only sight higher than contemplation.

[47] Par. II, 37:

S' io era corpo, e qui non si concepe
com' una dimensione altra patio
ch' esser convien se corpo in corpo repe,
accender ne dovria più il disio
di veder quella essenza in che si vede
come nostra natura a Dio s' unio.
Lì si vedrà ciò che tenem per fede,
non dimostrato, ma fia per sè noto
a guisa del ver primo che l' uom crede.

passage of the puzzle of whether bodies interpenetrate as kindling our desire to see the *essence* (line 41) of the Trinity in its aspect as the mystery of the Incarnation. This is precisely what Dante does see in the closing lines of the Paradiso. The double allusion to Paul and the reference to seeing the essence of God, a reference which turns out to be a promise which the poet as pilgrim fulfils, point unmistakably, in my opinion, to the conclusion that Dante was one of those who believed that St. Paul did see God in his essence.

The first twenty-nine cantos of the Paradiso are, in fact, an imaginative rendering of what it means to see God both *per fidem* and *per speculum* or *aenigma*. The ascent, in these cantos, takes place in space and time and is an ascent to the invisible things of God *a creatura mundi*. Persons, planets, things all reflect the infinite eternal light in some finite mode. Simultaneously, we are enlightened concerning that body of dogma which constitutes the object of faith.[48] The last four cantos are a rendering of seeing God *per speciem* or *facie ad faciem*, for to pass into the empyrean means nothing less than to see God in his essence. But before we examine the final vision let us turn to another allusion to St. Paul.

In Paradiso XXVIII (100 ff.) Dante sees the angelic hierarchy as circles revolving around a point of minute intensity which is God. Beatrice explains their order, nature and functions and Dante uses this occasion to correct both the ordering he adopted in Convivio II, vi derived from Isidore of Seville through Brunetto Latini, and the one put forth by Gregory. The true ordering is that of Dionysius, which differs from Isidore's in a shifting of Thrones, Dominations, Powers and Principalities, and from Gregory's in the interchange of Virtues and Principalities. Beatrice says:

And Dionysius set himself with such zeal to contemplate these orders that he named and distributed them as I do; but later Gregory differed from him, so that as soon as he opened his eyes in this heaven he smiled at himself. And if a mortal on earth set forth a truth so secret

[48] See Joseph A. Mazzeo, "Dante the poet of love: Dante and the Phaedrus tradition of poetic inspiration," Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 99, no. 3, June, 1955, pp. 133–145, p. 134 on *speculatio*.

thou needst not marvel, for that he saw it here above revealed to him, with much more of the truth of these circles.[49]

Dante here discusses three of the greatest mystics he knew, and orders them according to clarity of vision, with St. Paul at the top followed by Dionysius and Gregory. It is clear that Dionysius, through amorous contemplation, was able to order the angelic hierarchy correctly, yet Dante also says that he was able to divulge such a secret truth because St. Paul told him about it. These two statements would seem to be contradictory unless we allow that whatever contemplative vision Dionysius possessed needed to be verified to him by St. Paul. It is clear that St. Gregory was mistaken, however, and he was, let us recall, a great medieval authority on the contemplative life. St. Gregory's error is especially significant in view of his insistence on the impossibility of seeing eternal things, especially God, clearly, and his frequent use of "fog" and "cloud" to qualify the degree of contemplative vision.

Dante, in effect, allows to Gregory precisely the kind of contemplative vision Gregory thought possible. Similarly with Pseudo-Dionysius, who frequently refers to St· Paul as his *manuductor* (*cheiragogos*), or instructor.[50] He is therefore given a lesser and apparently indirect knowledge of the angelic hierarchy. What is certainly clear is that Paul is singled out as the greatest visionary, as the man who really saw heavenly things as they are.

Whether or not Dante the man had a vision of God's essence in the mortal state is really a meaningless question. But that

[49] Par. XXVIII, 130:

E Dionisio con tanto disio
a contemplar questi ordini si mise,
che li nomò e distinse com' io.
Ma Gregorio da lui poi si divise;
onde, sì tosto come li occhi aperse
in questo ciel, di sè medesmo rise.
E se tanto secreto ver proferse
mortale in terra, non voglio ch' ammiri;
chè chi 'l vide, qua su liel discoperse
con altro assai del ver di questi giri.

[50] See St. Thomas Aquinas, In librum beati Dionysii de divinis nominibus expositio, ed. C. Pera, Taurini-Romae, 1950, nn. 219, 249, 700, and the corresponding texts.

Dante as author of and character in the Divine Comedy claims and describes such a vision is beyond doubt. Dante the pilgrim is in heaven, so that he is committed in terms of the universe of the poem to the rendering of such a vision, and Dante the author of the letter to Can Grande, commenting on the final *cantica* of his poem, presents a claim which, taken together with those of the Comedy, insists on the reality of the vision the pilgrim sees. The final rapturous visions of God's essence in the Paradiso are given to us as *remembered* by the author of the poem.

Dante prepares us for this final vision in Paradiso XXX by his description of his acquisition of a new sense of sight, a "novella vista," a sight so strong that it will bear any light, even that essential, immaterial light of God.[51] The pilgrim in order to complete his journey must acquire a new kind of vision whereby he sees with the eyes of the soul or mind, a vision whereby invisible and intelligible things are seen in their essence and immediately.[52] Dante magnificently describes for us the gradually developing powers of this new sense of sight, its first visions through images which gradually are replaced with their realities. Paradise first appears as a river of light from which emerge living sparks, but after Dante drinks with his eyes from that river, he sees both the courts of paradise made plain. His growing vision so excites him that he begins to repeat some form of the verb "to see" every few

[51] Mazzeo, "Dante, the poet of love," p. 135 for the "new sight." Par. XXX, 58:

> e sì come di lei bevve la gronda
> tale, che nulla luce è tanto mera,
> che li occhi miei non si fosser difesi.
> E vidi lume in forma di rivera
> fulvido di fulgore, intra due rive
> dipinte di mirabil primavera.
> Di tal fiumana uscian faville vive,
> e d' ogni parte si mettien dè fiori
> quasi rubin che oro circunscrive.

[52] Cf. Benjamin Major III, 9; P.L. 196, col. 118D–119A. *De sensu intellectuali, quo solo possunt invisibilia videri.* Intelligentiae siquidem oculus est sensus ille, quo invisibilia videmus, non sicut oculo rationis, quo occulta, et absentia per investigationem quaerimus et inveniemus, sicut saepe causas per effectus, vel effectus per causas, et alia atque alia quocumque rationcianandi modo comprehendimus. Sed, sicut corporalia corporeo sensu videre solemus visibiliter, praesentaliter atque corporaliter, sic utique intellectualis ille sensus invisibilia capit, invisibiliter quidem, sed praesentaliter, sed essentialiter.

lines, especially "vidi," "I saw," on which he makes a triple rhyme.[53]

The next two cantos are devoted to the growth of his newly acquired powers, his transfer from Beatrice to St. Bernard and, most important, his prayer to the Virgin for that final grace necessary to have the beatific vision. Upon conclusion of the prayer, Dante's sight became even purer and began entering more deeply into the exalted light which is true *in itself*, not the light which simply makes truth in finite intellects (Par. XXXIII, 52–54: chè la mia vista, venendo sincera, / e più e più intrava per lo raggio / dell' alta luce che da sè è vera.). Then, in a passage of surpassing power, Dante completely reverts to his role as narrator of what the pilgrim experienced:

From that moment my vision was greater than our speech, which fails at such a sight, and memory too fails at such excess. Like him that sees in a dream and after the dream the passion wrought by it remains and the rest returns not to his mind, such am I; for my vision almost wholly fades, and still there drops within my heart the sweetness that was born of it. Thus the snow loses its imprint in the sun; thus in the wind on the light leaves the Sibyl's oracle was lost.[54]

This residue of his great experience is like the imprinted passion

[53] Par. XXXIII, 88:

e sì come di lei bevve la gronda
delle palpebre mie, così mi parve
di sua longhezza divenuta tonda.
Poi come gente stata sotto larve
che pare altro che prima, se si sveste
la sembianza non sua in che disparve,
così mi si cambiaro in maggior feste
li fiori e le faville, sì ch' io vidi
ambo le corti del ciel manifeste.
O isplendor di Dio, per cu' io vidi
l' alto triunfo del regno verace,
damni virtù a dir com' io il vidi!

[54] Par. XXXIII, 55:

Da quinci innanzi il mio veder fu maggio
ch'l parlar nostro, ch'a tal vista cede,
e cede la memoria a tanto oltraggio.
Qual è colui che somniando vede,
che dopo il sogno la passione impressa
rimane, e l' altro alla mente non riede,
cotal son io, chè quasi tutta cessa
mia visione, ed ancor me distilla
nel core il dolce che nacque da essa.

of a dream, the feeling of joy which remains upon awakening but without the content, which has fled. His memory too fails at such a sight, and this memory is not what we ordinarily mean by memory, but what St. Augustine calls a "loving memory," the only thing he carried back with him when his mind was carried up, in the flash of a twinkling eyesight, to the sight of that which *is*, to the invisible things of God which are understood by the things that are made. This "loving memory," the residue of his vision of ultimate truth, is an appetite for what he had smelt, but had not been able to eat of.[55]

St. Augustine's memory is similar to, but not really like platonic *anamnesis*, the unconscious retention of things seen in some early, disembodied existence. It is rather that portion of man's spirit which is the seat of both self-consciousness and self-transcendence, that place in which all men retain their implicit awareness of God's existence, and in which the contemplative guards the residue, the "loving memory," of his vision of that which truly is.[56] It is that partial knowledge of God which presupposes the human quest of him and it is what remains if the quest is successful in this life. What Dante is able to recall from this memory is the final vision in its final form, purged of the imagery of speculation and the less exalted forms of contemplation. It is the vision of the reality toward which all the earlier images of the Paradiso pointed.[57]

He first has a sight of God as essential light, as a living ray, which is so keen that he would have been dazzled if he turned away, although he is able to sustain it and determines to continue to do so until he attains the infinite goodness.[58]

I think, from the keenness I endured of the livng ray, that I should

[55] St. Augustine, Confessions, with translation by William Watts, 2 vols., London, 1913 (Loeb Classical Library), VII, c.17: ". . . et pervenit ad id, quod est, in ictu trepidantis aspectus. tunc vero invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi, sed aciem figere non evalui, et repercussa infirmitate redditus solitis, non mecum ferebam nisi amantem memoriam et quasi olefacta desiderantem, quae comedere nondum possem."

[56] John Burnaby, Amor Dei, a study of St. Augustine's teaching on the love of God and the motive of the christian life (Hulsean Lectures), London, 1938, pp. 155–156 and 33 ff.

[57] Mazzeo, "Dante, the poet of love," p. 134 esp. n.2.

[58] On God as essential light see Mazzeo, op.cit., pp. 137 ff.

have been dazzled if my eyes had been turned from it; and I remember that for this cause I was the bolder to sustain it until I reached with my gaze the Infinite Goodness.[59]

The last clause of this passage also translates "so that I reached the infinite goodness with my glance or face." It is thus at this moment that Dante begins his rendering of a sight of God *facie ad faciem*, and the first essential attribute of God that he sees is God as the Good, as *summum bonum*.

Dante then looks into the essential light which is God, enabled to do so by the abundance of grace which he now possesses. He next sees, in its depths, substance and accidents and their relationships, the categories of reality in their transcendent uncreated being, fused in such a unified way that they appear to be a simple light. He believes that he saw the universal form of this great knot of categories because he feels his joy expand, experiences a growing vividness of that "loving memory" of his vision.[60] The universal form of the categories in their transcendent reality is nothing more than uncreated being itself, God's essence. The simple light into which being is fused is another essential attribute of God, his unity. Dante then returns to his vision of God as the Good when he tells us it is a light the sight of which makes it impossible for anyone ever to fix his gaze on anything else,

[59] Par. XXXIII, 76:

Io credo, per l' acume ch' io soffersi
del vivio raggio, ch' i' sarei smarrito,
se li occhi miei da lui fossero aversi.
E mi ridorda ch' io fui più ardito
per questo a sostener, tanto ch' i' giunsi
l' aspetto mio col valore infinito.

[60] Par. XXXIII, 82:

O abbondante grazia ond' io presunsi
ficcar lo viso per la luce etterna,
tanto che la veduta vi consunsi!
Nel suo profondo vidi che s' interna,
legato con amore in un volume,
cio' che per l' universo si squaderna:
sustanze e accidenti e lor costume,
quasi conflati insieme, per tal modo
che cio' ch' i' dico e un semplice lume.
La forma universal di questo nodo
credo ch' l' vidi, perchè più di largo,
dicendo questo, mi sento ch' i' godo.

since all the good which is the object of the will is gathered up in that final good's perfection.[61]

God has so far been seen as *summum verum*, the light which in itself is true, *summum bonum et summum unum*, and as *summum ens*, as that kind of being whose essence is its existence. But this is still the God of the philosophers, not the God of the Christians, and the rest of the canto is taken up with Dante's magnificent rendering of his vision of the Trinity, the direct intuition of a paradox. It first appears as three concentric circles, then upon further gaze, the human likeness of the Incarnate Deity appears within the circlings (XXXIII, 115–136). Dante then wanted to see how the image is fitted to the circle, but his own wings were not sufficient for that. Suddenly he was struck by a flash and his mind received its wish; his desire and will, infinitely satisfied, took on the circular motion of eternal spirit in harmony with "the Love that moves the sun and other stars." [62]

Dante thus recapitulates all of the Pauline modes of knowledge and experience of God. He is seen *per speculum* and *facie ad faciem*, *per fidem* and *per speciem*. We ascend to a sight of the *invisibilia ipsius a creatura mundi*, and through the power of the poet's imagination we become that man, Dante or St. Paul, *raptus usque ad tertium coelum, in paradisum*. God is seen as supreme

[61] Par. XXXIII, 100:

A quella luce cotal si diventa,
che volgersi da lei per altro aspetto
è impossibil che mai si consenta;
però che 'l ben, ch' è del volere obietto,
tutto s' accoglie in lei, e fuor di quella
è defettivo ciò ch' è lì perfetto.

Dante here has a sight of God as the perfect Good, the word "aspetto" or sight used as the object of the sense, whereas in line 81 it is used to mean the sense itself. On God's essence as supreme being and supreme good see the classic discussion by Étienne Gilson, The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy (Gifford Lectures, 1931–1932), trans. by A. H. C. Downes, New York, 1940, pp. 42 ff.

[62] Par. XXXIII, 137:

veder volea come si convenne
l' imago al cerchio e come vi s' indova;
ma non eran da ciò le proprie penne:
se non che la mia mente fu percossa
da un fulgore in che la sua voglia venne.
All' alta fantasia qui mancò possa;
ma già volgeva il mio disio e 'l velle,
sì come rota ch' igualmente è mossa,
l' amor che move il sole e l' altre stelle.

light, being, unity and truth, and above all as the Trinity enclosing the mystery of the Incarnation. The final flash is the perfect understanding of this mystery, a truth which Dante cannot remember although he has seen and understood it, a truth which is the essence of the Christian God and which completes all possible human knowledge of him either in this life or the hereafter.[63]

The rendering of the beatific vision, the crucial allusions to St. Paul as well as the identification that Dante makes with him, all indicate not only that the universe of the Paradiso is an imaginative rendering and synthesis of the Pauline modes of vision, but that Dante included among those visions seeing God in his essence. Dante's work has often been called vision literature and it obviously ought to be. The important point is that Dante worked in a tradition which made elaborate distinctions between kinds of vision: direct and indirect, prophetic and contemplative, apocalyptic and rapturous, and that his journey in one important aspect is a journey through higher and higher *modes* as well as degrees of vision. Studies of Dante in relation to this tradition may offer new insights into the principles of structure which govern the universe of the Divine Comedy.[64]

[63] Paget Toynbee in his edition of Dante's letters cites (p. 191) a passage from the Benjamin Major IV, 23; P.L. 196, col. 167B–C on the impossibility of remembering what one has seen in a supernatural rapture and, paradoxically, remembering that one has seen far more than can actually be recalled. The relevant part reads: "Et quamvis inde aliquid in memoria teneamus, et quasi per medium velum et velut in medio nebulae videamus, nec modum quidem videndi, nec qualitatem visionis comprehendere, vel recordari sufficimus. Et mirum in modum reminiscentes non reminiscimur, et non reminiscentes reminiscimur, dum videntes non pervidemus, et aspicientes non perspicimus, et intendentes non penetramus."

[64] See for example the stimulating essay of Bruno Nardi, "Dante profeta," in Dante e la cultura medievale, 2nd. ed. Bair, 1949, pp. 336 ff. Nardi discusses Dante's synthesis of kinds of prophetic vision and dreams, and also takes the poet's claims to prophetic inspiration seriously. Although he rightly plays down the importance of the apocryphal *Visio sancti Pauli* except to say that it enjoyed considerable prestige, he does nothing with the Pauline tradition of kinds of vision nor with the force of Dante's identification with St. Paul in the light of the long tradition of controversy about the apostle's experience.

EUSEBIUS AND THE GOSPEL TEXT

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The Harvard Theological Review has recently carried an article by D. S. Wallace-Hadrill entitled "Eusebius and the Gospel Text of Caesarea."[1] Students of the Eusebian text have known for some time that Mr. Wallace-Hadrill was working on this problem with what appeared to be unusual thoroughness.[2] His published conclusions in the Harvard Theological Review come as something of a surprise and require some attention.

Mr. Wallace-Hadrill finds strong Alexandrian testimony to the Eusebian text of all four Gospels. The present writer's study of Eusebius[3] did not yield sufficient information concerning the historian's text of Mark to question Wallace-Hadrill's conclusions. Very different results were drawn from the evidence concerning the Fourth Gospel, and a partial report on this material has appeared.[4]

Attention in this note will center, therefore, on Wallace-Hadrill's conclusions with respect to Eusebius' text in Matthew and Luke.

Mr. Wallace-Hadrill writes:

> Although the evidence provided by some of the lesser works of Eusebius is scanty, we may conclude that the dominant text of Eusebius' Matthew is Alexandrian.[5]

A detailed report of my findings for Matthew is scheduled to appear elsewhere.[6] Here, we shall focus attention on the evidence in Praeparatio Evangelica. Wallace-Hadrill declares that in this

[1] HTR, XLIX (1956), 105–114.

[2] "An Analysis of Some Quotations from the First Gospel in Eusebius' *Demonstratio Evangelica*," JTS, N. S. I (1950), 168–175.

[3] The New Testament Text of Eusebius of Caesarea (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Duke University, 1954).

[4] "Eusebius' Text of John in the 'Writings against Marcellus,'" JBL, LXXV (1956), 137–142.

[5] HTR, XLIX (1956), 106.

[6] Since this was written, an article by the present writer on "The Eusebian Text of Matthew" has appeared in Novum Testamentum I (1956), 233–245.

work he finds fourteen variants from the TR, "which show a preponderance of Alexandrian support. Western readings appear as often as Alexandrian, but are not as strong (D only appears once)."[7] By Alexandrian witnesses, he means ℵABCLRTZΞPQ 33 157 bo sa; by Western, he means D it vg Cyp.[8] The following detailed information includes only twelve variants from TR, but it includes every citation of Matthew listed in the Register of Karl Mras' GCS edition of Praep.[9] For the convenience of the reader, the location of the reference in Praep. is indicated by the numbers in parenthesis in this fashion: ([vol] 2, [p.] 75, [1.] 5).[10]

1. Mt. 5:5 (2, 75, 5). This is a possible citation of the Matthean verse, but more probably is a reference to Ps. 36 (37):11.

2. Mt. 5:28 (1, 17, 20). This is an allusion, and is too vague to be useful.

3. Mt. 5:34, 37 (1, 17, 23). An allusion. It may possibly, but not probably, reflect a reading found in θ and 213.

4. Mt. 5:44 (2, 182, 28). This passage has obviously suffered from assimilation to Lk. 6:28. In its present form, it supplies no evidence concerning the Eusebian text. A full discussion of its problems will be found in my The New Testament Text of Eusebius of Caesarea, pp. 184–186.

5. Mt. 5:45 (2, 183, 1). Contains three variants. (a) The first is unique. (b) The second is attested by 33 of the Alexandrian group, θ fam 13 700 of the Caesarean, a number of MSS not included in Wallace-Hadrill's groupings, Clement, and Origen. (c) The third is read by it vg sy^{omn} Cyp. None of these

[7] Ibid., p. 105.

[8] The adoption of Wallace-Hadrill's categories in this paper should not be taken to imply acceptance of them. On the contrary, his Alexandrian category appears much too broad; the inclusion of A and 157, for example, needs argumentative support. Moreover, treating the vg as Western requires great caution, since this version is in some measure a revision of the Latin in the direction of the Alexandrian authorities.

[9] In a few instances, Mras calls attention to a scripture citation which is imbedded in a passage from another Father who has been quoted by Eusebius. These citations have no claim to be Eusebian, and are — of course — ignored.

[10] There is very little difference between the Gospel quotations in the Mras and Gifford editions. Reference is made to the location of the Matthean passages in Mras simply because Gifford is so inaccessible to most American readers. While the Mras text was only completed this year, it can doubtless be found in more libraries.

variants can be called Alexandrian. The second has some claim to be considered Caesarean. The last is clearly Western.

6. Mt. 6:33 (2, 106, 20). Contains four variants. (a) The first is found in *k* and in two Western Fathers, Clement and Tertullian. (b) The second is the reading of it vg Tert. (c) The third is found only in Tertullian and another Western Father, Justin, and two minuscules. (d) The fourth (which is in Gifford's text, but Mras' apparatus) is supported by it vg. All of these variants are clearly Western.

7. Mt. 6:34 (2, 124, 20). No variant.

8. Mt. 7:6 (2, 96, 18). No variant.

9. Mt. 10:28 (2, 189, 6). Two variants. (a) The first is found in Wallace-Hadrill's Alexandrian witnesses ℵBC 157; Caesarean MSS 700 fam 13; and in 472 482 and others. (b) The reading in the Gifford *text* is that of Bϕ 372 565 and TR. However, this is not the reading adopted by Mras, and Gifford's apparatus shows still a third reading in MSS of the Praep. The first of these variants may be Alexandrian. The second is uncertain. (Also, a unique variant in this verse is in Mras' text, but not in Gifford's.)

10. Mt. 12:36 (1, 18, 5). This citation is very unusual and probably memoriter.

11. Mt. 16:18 (1, 13, 1). There is one variant. With the addition of a single word, it would be identical with a variant found only in Western witnesses it vg Tert. The verse appears with the full Western reading in the Demonstratio. The Praep. reading must be counted as unique if it is correct, as Western if a word has dropped from the passage.

12. Mt. 19:17 (2, 47, 7). One variant, found in Alexandrian witnesses L 157 bo; in Western witnesses it vg; in Caesarean witnesses θ 700 fam 1 22, and in other MSS. Whatever the reading is, it is hardly Alexandrian.

13. Mt. 25:21 (2, 89, 12). No variants.

This is the evidence concerning Eusebius' quotations from Mt. in the Praep. There is in this no "preponderance of Alexandrian support." On the contrary, there is strong Western predominance.

With respect to the Third Gospel, Mr. Wallace-Hadrill con-

cludes that "Eusebius' text of Luke in the works which afford evidence is, therefore, almost without admixture Alexandrian." [11] In the present writer's study of Eusebius' text of Luke, twenty-seven variants from TR were found. The works consulted included the GCS editions of Über das Leben Constantins, Das Onomastikon der biblischen Ortsnamen, Gegen Marcell, Über die kirchliche Theologie, Die Kirchengeschichte, Gaisford's Eclogae Propheticae, and Gifford's Evangelicae Praeparationis. The following two tables will describe the data.

AGREEMENTS BETWEEN EUSEBIUS AND GROUPS OF MANUSCRIPTS AND VERSIONS, AGAINST THE TEXTUS RECEPTUS

Eusebius agrees with:

D it	20 times
θ 1 13	
22 28	
124 565	
700	17 times
ℵBCL 33	14 times

AGREEMENTS BETWEEN EUSEBIUS AND THE "GREAT TEXTS" OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Eusebius agrees with:

Alexandrian, Caesarean, and Western	11 times
Alexandrian and Caesarean	4 times
Caesarean and Western	2 times
Western alone	7 times
Caesarean alone	2 times
None of these (a unique variant)	1 time
Alexandrian alone	0 times

The purpose of this discussion does not require a discussion of this evidence. Even without interpretation, it is obvious that for these twenty-seven readings the description of Eusebius' Lucan text as Alexandrian, "almost without admixture" would be inaccurate.

[11] HTR, op. cit., p. 108.

A NOTE ON THE FORMAT OF THE PAULINE CORPUS

In the April, 1956 issue of the Harvard Theological Review appeared an article by Jack Finegan on "The Original Form of the Pauline Collection," which purports to be a refutation of some suggestions of my own about the order of the letters in the primitive collection. Without intending to do so, he seriously misrepresents my position. I should like to correct this error in understanding as well as to make a few additional comments.

In my little book, Philemon Among the Letters of Paul, published in 1935, I devoted a chapter to defending the hypothesis that in the original collection of Paul's letters, the arrangement was in the order of length. The basis of this argument was the arrangement of the epistles in the Marcionite canon, where the order of length generally prevails. There were reasons, however, quite apart from considerations of the orders in canonical lists, for believing that originally Ephesians was in first place. These reasons had been presented by E. J. Goodspeed, whose brilliant work on the origins of the collection, provided both basis and stimulus for any efforts of my own.[1] My theory, then was that the original corpus began with Ephesians and that the rest of the letters followed in order of length beginning with Corinthians and ending with Philemon or (more probably) with Philippians, Colossians and Philemon in the latter case being taken together. By way of secondary confirmation of this conjecture, I pointed out that when the collection was first published it would probably have appeared on two rolls and that Ephesians and Corinthians, the first two items in the hypothetical format, would just nicely fill the first of two rolls of approximately equal size, whereas Corinthians alone would have been too short and Corinthians-Romans would have been much too long. It would be inappropriate for me to present the whole of my argument. It has been fully stated in the book I have just referred to and, with some further elaboration, in Marcion and the New Testament, published in 1942.

Dr. Finegan in singling out the point of his objection makes no attempt to place it in the context of my hypothesis as a whole. He neither summarizes the hypothesis nor refers his readers to the two writings in which alone I make any serious effort either to state or to defend it.

[1] See his New Solutions of New Testament Problems (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927) and The Meaning of Ephesians (University of Chicago Press, 1933).

The earlier and more pertinent of these he does not even name; the other is mentioned, but in another connection. One would get the impression from his article that I have dealt with this subject only in three summary paragraphs which belong to my introduction to Romans in the Interpreter's Bible. I know, of course, that Dr. Finegan did not intend to leave such an impression; and I know also that one's pride can betray one into thinking that an omission of this kind is more serious than it is.

I find it harder, however, to overlook the following: "Knox points to what the present writer considers the correct answer to the problem, namely that Marcion's order is that of length and that such an order would also have been the natural one for the original editor of the Pauline collection to use. Then, however, Knox abandons the solution thus indicated in favor of the complex hypothesis of a two-roll collection, one roll headed by Ephesians, the other by Romans, which means an order determined by factors other than relative length." But this is simply not true. My position as first stated in 1935 has been affirmed a number of times since, most recently in the article in the Interpreter's Bible, to which alone Dr. Finegan refers. Not only have I not "abandoned" the position that the order of length was determinative, but I have often reiterated it — some, even of my friends, would probably say *ad nauseam*. The suggestion about the two rolls is a confirmatory indication, not an "abandonment." After all, ancient works were often in more than one volume, and it hardly needs to be said that such an arrangement did not disturb the order of the work as a whole. The contents of "Volume I" preceded those of "Volume II" in ancient as well as modern works.

Dr. Finegan argues that the roll was probably not used for the first collection. He surmises that the codex form was used. This, I gather from the paleographers, is certainly a possibility — perhaps much more than this. But in spite of the evidences that the codex was used, especially among Christians, much earlier than was supposed even a score of years ago, is it not on the whole more likely that as early as A.D. 90–100 the roll form would still have been employed? After all, it had held the field for a long time and we are not without indications of its continued use among Christians, despite the surprisingly extensive and surprisingly early evidences of the codex. But let no one misunderstand me: I have no desire to argue with the paleographers, including Dr. Finegan, on a point like this. I have listened with the greatest respect to what they have had to say on this matter of how early the codex overtook and replaced the scroll in Christian circles, and shall continue

to do so.[2] If it should be proved that among Christians before the end of the first century the scroll had largely given way to the codex — that, for example, Matthew, Luke-Acts, Hebrews and John, not to mention the βιβλίον Revelation, were probably written in codex form — then I should have to give up my argument about the scrolls. I do not gather, however, that such a situation yet exists, and until it does, I submit that my argument, so long as it is not presented dogmatically, is legitimate.

But what I am really concerned to do in this note is not to defend this point, but rather to set it in its proper context. If I should be forced to give up my argument from the scrolls, I should be giving up only a minor prop to my position; I should not be under the slightest necessity of modifying, much less of abandoning, the position itself. That position rests on other grounds entirely — namely, upon certain considerations pointing to the primacy of Ephesians and to other considerations pointing to the order of length as the decisive principle in the organization of the corpus.

Much the larger part of Dr. Finegan's article is concerned with presenting data regarding the orders of the letters in later lists and manuscripts. He concludes that in these the principle of relative length tends to apply. I remember more than twenty years ago when I was a student at the University of Chicago going through this same material with Rendel Harris' work on Stichometry before me, trying to see what I could make of much the same data. I came out with a conclusion surprisingly like Dr. Finegan's. I stated it at that time in these terms: "The tendency to arrange the letters of Paul in the order of their length seems to have been operative in the whole subsequent history of the canon. When Corinthians and Thessalonians came each to be thought of as two books (it is quite possible that they then became two books), Marcion's order would obviously no longer be the order of length. But in the various lists beginning with the Muratorian, one can see signs that the idea of arrangement in the order of length is at work like yeast until comparatively early our own list emerges" (Philemon Among the Letters of Paul, p. 40). So far as the position of Ephesians is concerned, neither Dr. Goodspeed nor I would have had the slightest expectation that it would retain its original initial

[2] I think especially of C. H. Roberts, "The Christian Book and the Greek Papyri," Journal of Theological Studies L (1949), pp. 155 ff., and earlier, of E .J. Goodspeed, in Christianity Goes to Press (New York, Macmillan Company, 1940), pp. 67 ff., and of C. C. McCown "Codex and Roll in the New Testament," Harvard Theological Review XXXIV (1941), pp. 219 ff.

position. Once the general letter became a church letter like the rest, it would at once have tended to drop to its appropriate place in the order. I am glad that Dr. Finegan finds the data of the lists confirming the hypothesis that the decisive principle of order in the original corpus was that of relative length. The perplexing thing is that he could so misunderstand my position as to suppose he is refuting it.

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